TALES

OF THE

TWELFTH AND THIRTEENTH CENTURIES.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

Price Six Shillings ſewed.

Entered at Stationers Hall.

BRITISH MUSEUM

TALES

OF THE

TWELFTH AND THIRTEENTH CENTURIES.

FROM

THE FRENCH OF MR. LE GRAND.

VOL. I.

Si honor apud te antiquitati & fabulis quoque.
PLINY.

LONDON:

Printed for *Egerton*, *Hookham*, *Kearsley*, *Robinson*, *Bew* and *Sewel*.

MDCCLXXXVI.

BRITISH MUSEUM

PREFACE.

THE publication of the preſent work has been attended with circumſtances unuſually intereſting, and has thrown an entirely new light on the hiſtory of European literature. The object of Mr. *Le Grand*, in collecting and tranſlating from the old manuſcripts the tales of which theſe volumes are compoſed, ſeems to have been no leſs the inveſtigation of truth, than an ardent zeal for the reputation of his country. With indefatigable aſſiduity, and the ſcience of an ingenious antiquary, he has removed the rubbiſh of ſeven centuries, and diſcovered the boundaries of literary property, between different kingdoms, and between different provinces of the ſame kingdom, to have been far otherwiſe traced, than has of late been generally imagined. He has detected the incroachments of other nations, particularly of the Italians, on his own; and he has wreſted

the ſtolen trophies from the brows of their fabuliſts, and has replaced them on the heads of his own countrymen. At the ſame time, he has conteſted, and to all appearance confuted, the claim of priority made by one part of his nation over the other, by the Southern over the Northern provinces of France. It may be readily conjectured, that our author could not invade with ſo rude a hand the ſacred repoſitories of national pride, without rouſing the zeal of many adverſaries. In fact the ordinary fate of innovators has befallen Mr. *Le Grand*, who has now all the learned beyond the Loire to encounter. The ſtorm is alſo moſt probably brewing in Italy, though it has not yet had time to croſs the Alps. Thus the learned both of England and France, have about the ſame time been engaged in controverſies ſomewhat ſimilar, reſpecting the antiquity of their poems of chivalry and romance.—But we will give the ſubſtance of our author's prefatory diſſertation in his own words.

" There are in literature two ſpecies of works, valued leſs than they deſerve, tranſlations and extracts. Without undertaking here

here either to defend or to exalt a kind of compoſition, which I have myſelf choſen, I ſhall only obſerve, that the low eſteem, in which they are held by the public, has had an unlucky influence on the opinion of the literary world. It cannot be expected that an armed *Minerva* ſhould ſpring from the brain of every author. He who raiſes a dead body from the grave and infuſes freſh life into it, has wherewithal to glory. But every one muſt be a genius; and this fatal preſumption of ſelf-love, in depriving us of many valuable works, is attended with the further miſchief, of producing an infinity of bad ones.

Unleſs I have deceived myſelf, what I now preſent to my country may afford it at once pleaſure and information. It ſhould at leaſt intereſt the literati in developing to them the monuments of the poetry of their anceſtors. The catacombs of our antient poets, into which none have hitherto deſcended, or in which no very accurate inveſtigation has been made, would certainly furniſh an intelligent and enterprizing enquirer with more than one diſcovery of this nature. But to the preſent

moment every circumſtance has operated to deter from the purſuit. Our old rhymers have not only been forgotten, but their memory treated at leaſt with indifference, if not contempt. Hiſtorians and modern writers have ſpoken of them with ſuch diſparagement, as to tempt one to ſuppoſe, that they were out of humour for having thrown away their time in the peruſal of them.

On the other hand, the provincial *Troubadours* have left behind them, I am at a loſs to know on what grounds, a reputation that has dazzled all the world. Italy, to which they have ſerved as a model, and where the affinity of their language got them an eaſy introduction, has thought proper to immortalize their memory. The gratitude of two or three celebrated writers of that country has preſerved them from oblivion. They were admitted to their high eminence, becauſe *Dante* and *Petrarch* ſung their praiſes; and now that few perſons are able, and fewer ſtill are diſpoſed, to examine their claims to ſuch impoſing panegyrics, the opinion of their merit prevails, even among the learned, to ſo great a degree

that

that there is not one to be found, who does not allow them to be the fathers of our modern literature; who does not conſider Provence as the happy point of the horizon, where after ſo long a gloom of barbarity and ignorance, the firſt dawn appeared of thoſe glorious, enlightened days, which afford us ſo much cauſe for exultation. This is one of thoſe prejudices, to which time gives the force of truth, and of which there are ſo many inſtances in hiſtory. If ſo obſcure a perſon as myſelf, unknown in the community of letters, may be permitted to canvaſs an opinion ſo univerſally received, I ſhall examine on what it is founded: the queſtion intimately concerns our literary hiſtory, and is connected with my ſubject.

After the mixture of the Franks from the north, and the Oſtrogoths, Viſigoths, Saracens and Alains from the ſouth, with the antient Gauls, and their Roman conqerors, two different languages were ſpoken in the kingdom, which were, however, both called *Romaine*, or *Romane*, becauſe each had the language of Rome for its baſis. All the inhabitants on this ſide of the Loire uſing the word *oil*, *(oui)*

as their affirmative, and thoſe on the other ſide, the word *oc*, one was called *la Langue d'oil*; and the other, *la Langue d'oc*. This laſt nevertheleſs received another denomination. *Raymond* IV. count of Provence, being in poſſeſſion of the ſovereignty over a great part of the ſouth of France, they began to term all his eſtates indifferently *Provence*, and the language which they in common ſpoke, *Provençal*. Thus when our hiſtorians mention the Provençal poets, they do not mean to ſpecify the poets of that particular diſtrict, encloſed by the Rhone and the Var, but comprehend under that name the rhymers of all the ſouthern provinces, or rather all thoſe, who have written in *Provençal Roman*; for in this liſt we reckon natives of Catalonia, of Arragon, and Italy. Of about an hundred and forty *Troubadours*, whoſe country is known, there are not more than twenty ſix of what is properly called *Provence*.

To ſet this number in competition with that of thoſe who wrote in *French Roman*, is quite out of the queſtion. As well might we attempt to count the inſects engendered in a ſummer. Scarcely was the language formed, before poets

poets appeared in it; which verifies a remark often made, that among every people verſe precedes proſe writing: in which circumſtance, there ſeems to be this peculiarity, that the firſt attempts are made in the moſt difficult ſpecies of compoſition. But in an art not yet reſtrained by rule, rhyming was ſo eaſy an occupation that all took a concern in it. All kinds of ſubjects were treated in verſe. One would have thought that the nation was afflicted with an epidemical diſtemper; and, like that people whoſe heads were inflamed by the ſun at a tragedy of Euripides, in their delirium could not ſpeak without a jingle.

In the midſt, however, of this frothy ſuperfluity of an ignorant age, one might diſtinguiſh three kinds of poetical compoſition, which, deſtined for the ſpecial amuſement of the ſovereigns and the nobles, form in ſome meaſure a diſtinct claſs; the romances, the ſongs, and the tales or ſtories. (Mr. *Le Grand* here gives an account of the origin and nature of the ſongs, which were compoſed on ſubjects either of love or arms, and then proceeds to the tales and romances.)

It might perhaps be ſuppoſed, that romance alſo was founded on love and gallantry. But this was not the caſe. We owe its riſe to the principle from which the cruſades originated, a miſapplied zeal for religion. The Saracens were in poſſeſſion of Spain, whence they perpetually threatened the conqueſt of France; and had actually carried their arms ſeveral times into the adjacent provinces. Here they had eſtabliſhed themſelves in ſome places that were held ſacred; a profanation that could not be looked upon with indifference in that age. Religion was thought intereſted in the encroachment; and it was judged neceſſary to ſound the trumpet againſt a band of conquering infidels, whom fanaticiſm rendered formidable. Thus originated the three firſt romantic compoſitions, that have come within my notice. In all three the hero, oppoſed to the Saracens, is *Charlemagne*, the moſt celebrated warrior that France had hitherto produced. One ſends him on an expedition to Paleſtine, another to Spain, and the third into Languedoc, to relieve Carcaſſonne and Narbonne, beſieged by the infidels. What may be worthy of remark is, that the authors of thoſe three religious

religious romances were monks: and their work, partly applied to the praiſe of their order, their abbey, or their reliques, to which they attribute many pretended miracles, bears in every page the impreſſion of monaſtic bigotry.

The poets were not tardy in adopting a ſpecies of fiction, ſo well ſuited to the exercise of an extravagant and unbridled imagination. Nevertheleſs, though they adopted the mode of compoſition, and often-times the hero of the monks, they did not follow ſo cloſely the ſubject, or make their verſe the alarm bell of religious fanaticiſm. Chivalry was then coming into vogue; and they conveyed it into their poems, with all its reſtleſs valour, its ardour for wonderful exploits, and the ſpirit of gallantry, which it produced. In almoſt every one the chief perſonage was a knight errant, who went about redreſſing wrongs, felling giants, protecting the honour of the fair ſex, carrying off the prize at tournaments, and atchieving for his miſtreſs feats of proweſs, to which all the exploits of Hercules were but child's play. I ſay for his miſtreſs; becauſe it was held abſolutely

lutely requiſite for a hero to be in love: and that is a principle from which there is not a ſingle deviation. Many indeed make the whole adventure turn upon love; and this proves that if writings have ſometimes influenced the manners of the age, theſe laſt have had their influence upon them.

Beſides the romances of chivalry and love, there is another kind, the leaſt numerous indeed of the three, which may be called *fairy romances*, of which the main ſpring is magic. Several of the ſtories that follow are of this ſpecies.

It is impoſſible to deſcribe to what degree romances multiplied within a century, not only in France, but among other nations. Italy and Spain adopted them. Many were tranſlated from our's into their languages; and preſerved ſo well their reputation, that, afterwards their memory being aboliſhed among us, ſome of our authors, believing them to be really of Spaniſh or Italian growth, tranſlated them again into French, as if they were originally ſtrangers. Of this there are ſeveral well known inſtances:

inſtances: and it would be no difficult matter for me to produce others.

The invention of romance was received in England with the ſame welcome as among our other neighbours. But that haughty people, then at variance with France, not willing to give their Paladins a French chieftain, choſe among their own princes, King *Arthur*, to whom they aſſign the conqueſt of a conſiderable part of France. This fabulous hiſtory of *Arthur* and his round table pleaſed ſo much our writers of romance, by the magic which it continually preſented, mixed with exploits of chivalry, that many of them adopted it, and choſe for the hero of their poems ſome Paladin of the Britiſh monarch.

The romances of love and fairyiſm are not numerous. Thoſe of chivalry, on the contrary, are infinitely ſo. Theſe laſt are commonly divided into three claſſes: tales of *Arthur*, tales of *Charlemagne*, and tales of *Amadis*. To which we might add a fourth, ſtill more numerous than any of the others; that of which the heroes are neither knights of *Arthur*, nor

nor of *Charles*, nor deſcendants of *Amadis* the Gaul, but *Paladins*, whom the poet takes from ſome other age or country ; as, *Percefo-ret*, *Alexander*, &c.

All the antient romances, at leaſt all that I have ſeen, were originally compoſed in verſe. Very few of them were tranſlated into proſe till the reign of *Charles* V. when the language having become more refined, had at the ſame time acquired that exquiſite turn of nature and ſimplicity, which it has ſince in a great meaſure loſt. *Francis* I. whoſe head was turned by this kind of reading, and who had conceived the moſt extravagant attachment to the antient chivalry, had the ſtories of *Amadis* tranſlated from the Spaniſh ; romances originally French, but with many others long ſince forgotten. Both in his reign, and in that of *Henry* II. theſe books were prodigiouſly in vogue, and were held in a degree of eſteem approaching to veneration.

It was, doubtleſs, this infatuation that gave offence to the important Mr. *La Noue*, ſince he employs the whole of one of his diſcourſes in declaiming againſt that ſpecies of compoſi-

tion.

tion. But if the reaſons which he alledges for its condemnation were as juſt as they evidently are feeble, it cannot at leaſt be denied, though romances might have ſhed ſome pernicious influence on the 16th century, that they contributed greatly, during the four preceding ones, to diſſipate the clouds of ignorance that overſpread the land, to promote the progreſs of poetry, to inſpire the rude nobility with a taſte for reading, and, above all, to diſſeminate through the nation that contempt of danger, that elevation of ſoul, and that enthuſiaſm for glory that conſtitute the hero. Some reſpectable authors have blamed *Cervantes* for having by his *Don Quixote* annihilated the ſpirit of chivalry. I ſhould not be at all ſurprized, if, in like manner among us, ſome were to regret the romances that infuſed that ſpirit; eſpecially when we conſider what kind of books have occupied their place. At every age we are in ſome reſpects children. Whether young or old, we devour with avidity the recital of thoſe wonders and incredible feats of valour, which elevate human nature in idea, and which, to move us, work upon thoſe powerful ſprings of the ſoul, ad-

miration, terror and pity. A little more art and variety had rendered our writers of romance irreſiſtably pleaſing. *Homer* had, like them, only the popular fables to embelliſh; and thoſe fables alſo are what *Arioſto* and *Boyardo* have made uſe of; but they wanted the genius of *Arioſto* and of *Homer*; and while theſe ſtill are admired, and will continue to be admired by poſterity, the others have already fallen into oblivion, and have left no traces of their memory.

What has been ſaid concerning the romances regards only the real French poets. I know of no more than four romances of the *Troubadours*, and they are all religious. What can have occaſioned ſuch a ſcarcity among them, in a kind of compoſition that was ſo much prized and ſo long in faſhion, I leave to the explanation of thoſe, who have ſo earneſtly cried up the Provencal rhymers. Such a boaſt is made of the lively imagination of the people that inhabit a country ſo favoured by heaven, and yet it has not produced a ſingle fairy tale! Their ſpirit of gallantry, ſo much talked of, has not carried them beyond a few inſipid ſongs; they have not even preſented the

the world with one love romance; nor, what is more extraordinary, one of chivalry, in an age when the minds of men by the conqueſts of Sicily, of Conſtantinople, of Jeruſalem, by the warlike exhibitions at the tournaments, and the ſplendour of the plenary courts, were fired with the enthuſiaſm of brilliant actions. Not that I appreciate very highly that kind of compoſition, which happily for us better works have ſince ſuperſeded. But it was the firſt then in vogue; it was what required the greateſt ſtretch of genius; in ſhort, it was the epopee of the age: and, as I obſerved before, the infatuation in favour of it being general, not only in France, but in the neighbouring kingdoms, one would be tempted to aſk whether the Provencals had no heads for epic poetry?

But there is a ſpecies that, with more variety, is capable of affording much greater entertainment, in which the rhymers of our northern provinces have had infinitely the advantage over their's; and that is, the fables or ſtories. They were termed *fables*, *flabels* or *fabliaux*, becauſe the greateſt part of them conſiſt of fabulous fictions; and the authors of them were called *fableors* or *fabliers*.

At Rome, in Perſia, in Greece and in Ionia, tales were the reſult of civilization, luxury and the arts: whence we might infer that they always precede or accompany the corruption of manners. We find, nevertheleſs, that the mind of man, unhappy when without agitation, has ſuggeſted this kind of entertainment to the moſt barbarous nations. Among us, when the towns had not, as at preſent, regular public amuſements, when the nobility lived in retirement at their caſtles, and ſaw each other only on certain feſtivals and particular occaſions, part of the entertainment at theſe meetings was the recital of romances. But theſe poems being in general too long to be recited at once, it became neceſſary to invent ſome that were more conciſe and more amuſing; and hence we probably derive the origin of the tales or ſtories, unleſs we rather admit the ſuppoſition, that they came from Aſia, and that we owe them to the cruſaders. It is true that many are of Arabian extraction, as I ſhall have occaſion to remark; and it is well known that in the eaſt theſe productions are of very remote antiquity. They were held there in ſuch high eſteem as to attract the attention of the government. The *Abbé le Maſcrier*, in his

his journey to Ægypt, tells us of an hoſpital eſtabliſhed by the Caliphs, in which among other contrivances for the relief of the afflicted, there were particular apartments for ſuch as could not reſt; in which muſicians were kept to enliven them with the ſound of their inſtruments, and perſons hired on purpoſe to divert them with ſtories.

Theſe little narrations were rendered ſtill more agreeable by the accompaniments of declamation and ſong. The revival of poetry, and the patronage it experienced from the great, had generated a prodigious number of buffoons, whoſe whole employment was going from province to province, and retailing the productions of our poets; which was the only way at that time they could be circulated. Muſicians by profeſſion, they ſet theſe compoſitions to muſic, and chaunted them at the ſame time that they accompanied the ſong with their ſeveral inſtruments. They commonly aſſociated with poets, and almoſt always with jugglers, who were remarkable either for ſlight of hand or their ſkill in training animals; and thus did theſe votaries of mirth travel from town to town,

and from caſtle to caſtle, exhibiting their performances to the people and nobles.

At firſt the vagabond nature of this profeſſion ſubjected it to contempt. The drunkenneſs of thoſe that embraced it, their mean avidity, and the laxity of their morals, rendered it completely opprobrious. But theſe men afforded ſome amuſement, and while they were perſonally deſpiſed, their talents were encouraged, and their company courted. Neighbouring nations paid them no leſs attention. Richard I. of England attracted them to his court, by very liberal rewards; and we find by a regulation of the municipal officers of Bologna, in 1228, prohibiting the French ſongſters from drawing crowds together in public places, that they had at that time found their way into Italy.

The French, who now diſpute ſo warmly concerning the merits of the Italian muſic of late years introduced among them, who glory in ſeeing their language, their drama and their faſhions ſo much cultivated throughout Europe, are aſſuredly far from harbouring a ſuſpicion, that their country, ſome few ages back, enjoyed a glory

glory ſtill more extenſive; little do they imagine that from her were derived the firſt modern poets, and to her was to be aſcribed the revival of poetry; that her muſic was ſought after; her ſtories, her romances admired, imitated or tranſlated by other nations; her chivalry in fine and her tournaments adopted from the Baltic to the Mediterranean. There was nothing even to her language, all barbarous as it appears to us, but was honoured with the ſame diſtinction. Tranſported into Naples and Sicily by the Normans, into England, by William the Conqueror, into Syria, Paleſtine, the Morea, the iſland of Cyprus and Conſtantinople by the cruſades, and the ſubſequent conqueſts, it prevailed over all others, with ſo acknowledged a pre-eminence, that the Engliſh ſent their children into France to learn it; and that *Brunetto Latini*, having compoſed during his ſtay with us a courſe of ſtudy, choſe to write it in our idiom; *becauſe* ſaid he, *it is the moſt agreeable to ſpeak and is common to all languages.*

This triumph of the language, whatever it might have been, is ſtill the triumph only of the *French Roman*. In all that has been ſaid, the

the Provençal is not at all concerned. Nor have I in the leaſt attended to it, in what I have remarked of the fabuliſts. The hiſtory of the *Troubadours*, publiſhed a few years ago, preſents us with no more than two ſtories: the one, *Arnold of Carcaſe*, the other *Raymond Vidal*; both of which were compoſed when our fabuliſts were in the zenith of their reputation. In order to compare them with the productions of our poets, it may be worth while to give a ſketch of them.

A knight, in love with a lady, diſpatches his parrot to her, with a declaration of his paſſion. The fair one accepts the offer of his heart; but the difficulty is to get a perſonal interview with her; and the lover is extremely embarraſſed to project the means. The bird ſuggeſts an expedient; which is, to ſet fire to her caſtle; in hopes that the confuſion ſuch an event would occaſion, might enable the lady to eſcape. The parrot accordingly executes the project, with ſome wild-fire, which it carries in its paw. The lady makes her eſcape, as they expected, goes to the appointed place of meeting, and finds this trick *the prettieſt that was ever played*.

In

In the ſtory of *Raimond Vidal*, *Baſcol*, a knight, is in love with the wife of *Alphonſo*, his neighbour; without having yet been ſo fortunate as to obtain her favour. The huſband, on diſcovering his paſſion, becomes jealous; and, in order to try his wife, pretends to take his departure on a journey; but returns at night and introduces himſelf to the wife in the diſguiſe of *Baſcol*. She recognizes her huſband, and after ſhutting him up, goes to find her lover; and moved by indignation at the prying jealouſy of her lord, ſhe grants the knight all that ſhe had hitherto refuſed him. The next morning, ſhe aſſembles her ſervants to take vengeance, as ſhe gives it out, upon a ſeducer, who had impudently made an attempt upon her virtue. They accordingly enter the room where he is confined with ſticks and ſtaves. *Alphonſo* then makes himſelf known, and entreats for pardon, vowing thenceforward unbounded confidence in his wife: ſhe, however, does not conſent to pardon him, till he agrees to go and make reparation and ſufficient apology to *Baſcal*.

Whence then do the *Troubadours* derive that extraordinary reputation which they have enjoyed?

enjoyed? We are in poſſeſſion of their hiſtory; and what does that hiſtory preſent, but a miſerable collection of love ditties and ſatires, which they call *Sirventes* and *Tenſons*, compoſitions without colouring, imagery or effect; a lifeleſs monotony of ſong, which ſinks under the efforts of the editor, with all his elegance of ſtile, to raiſe it? Nevertheleſs, in ſome of theſe ſouthern provinces, their poets are continually boaſting of their ſerene ſky, and their ſoil ever covered with flowers and verdure. One would imagine, on reading them, that in their country were realized the enchanting viſions of the antient Elyſium, and that among them children were brought into the world, with the ſound of the tabor and pipe. But under that propitious atmoſphere, where the very air they breathed muſt have inſinuated into their breaſts an irreſiſtable impulſe towards love and enjoyment, with the advantage which their language, harmonious and ſonorous, had over ours, full of naſal ſounds and mute ſyllables; why then, I ſay, did the *Troubadours* of thoſe diſtricts produce, like the reſt of the Provençal poets, nothing but wretched ſongs? Why did they all alike neglect the *Tales*, a branch of compoſition which is of all the moſt capable of affording

fording entertainment, and which was particularly uſed at feſtivals, and on all ſolemn occaſions, to amuſe the ſovereigns and the nobles?

A very intereſting remark here preſents itſelf, which I believe has never been yet ſuggeſted by any writer: it is, that thoſe provinces of France, which in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries produced the authors of romance and fable, are preciſely the ſame, that, in the ſeventeenth and eighteenth, have given to the world Moliere, Boileau, Racine, Rameau, Crebillon, La Fontaine, Boſſuet, Voltaire, Rouſſeau, Corneille, Buffon, Condé, Turenne, Le Brun, Le Pouſſin, Des Cartes, Vauban, &c. &c. &c; that is, the genius, the eloquence, the invention, the imagination, the ſublimity of talent, in ſhort all the celebrated poets and the illuſtrious heroes, who have adorned their country, or extended the limits of their ſeveral arts, ſciences or profeſſions. Shall we not then conclude that nature, in the unequal diſtribution of her gifts between the ſeveral diſtricts of the kingdom, has been pleaſed to allot the mental endowments more eſpecially to the provinces ſituated to the northward of the Loire? I ſhall not pretend to account

count for this phenomenon; but ſatisfied with ſtating the fact, ſhall leave the cauſe to be inveſtigated by others. But I cannot help obſerving, that ſhe had already begun in thoſe early ages to endow our northern provinces with that creative power, that vigour and fecundity of conception, which once more, for the ſecond time, but with much more reaſon, has rendered our writers models for imitation, and objects of admiration, to all Europe.

The rhymers of Provence, with the vanity that is common to thoſe who deal in verſe, diſtinguiſhed themſelves by the appellation of *Troubadours*; and the French rhymers, by that of *Trouveurs*, both in the ſeveral idioms derived from the verb *trouver* (to diſcover), which announced the talent of invention or genius, and anſwered to the title of *poet*, which the Grecian verſifiers had pompouſly arrogated to themſelves. But theſe two words of *Troubadour* and *Trouveur* met with a different fate. The former was retained to diſtinguiſh the poets from the other inhabitants of Provence, while the latter dropt into oblivion. The conſequence was, that theſe poets themſelves were ſoon forgotten. Italy having,

ing, on the other hand, eſtabliſhed the reputation of the *Troubadours*, no others have been thought of by our modern literati, who have fallen into the error of attributing to the *Troubadours* many facts and particulars that related to the *Trouveurs*: and thus it has happened that the former, carrying off the honours of the latter, have been conſidered as the fathers of French literature. Their very minſtrels partook of this furtive reputation. For whenever it is mentioned that a ſongſter appeared at the court of any foreign prince, it is immediately taken for granted that he recited Provençal poetry; no reflexion being made on the circumſtance, that this poetry, being in a language peculiar to certain provinces, could not eaſily be underſtood in others; and with ſtill more difficulty in foreign kingdoms. (The author, among other particular inſtances in confirmation of this argument, produces here a ſpecimen of the French and Provençal poetry; which proves the two languages to have been ſo widely different, that it muſt have been impoſſible for one to lead to any knowledge of the other.)

In my ſcrutiny into the real merits of the *Troubadours*, the reader may be aſſured, that I have not been biaſſed by a blind admiration for their rivals. It is, indeed, of little conſequence to me what quarter of the kingdom produced, ſix centuries ago, the moſt accompliſhed poets. I am actuated by the ſame impartiality reſpecting the fabuliſts, who certainly, of the whole, diſplay the greateſt exuberance of genius. They are in fact only my adopted children; I have not the tenderneſs of a father towards them, and feel that I could ſit in judgement over them, without becoming a Brutus.

But in acknowledging their defects, which after all are leſs to be aſcribed to them, than to the age in which they lived, it is but fair to do juſtice to their merits. Thus if I announced to the world, that a number of illiterate men, without model or cultivation, without any of thoſe helps that are to be derived from the multiplicity of good books and an enlightened ſociety, had invented ſtories that were the delight of their age, and that furniſhed food for a long time to the gaiety of the nation, would not this literary fact,

at

at the ſame time that it excited curioſity, claim a degree of indulgence. One would be deſirous to ſee what the human mind, by its own force alone, is able to accompliſh. But if I added, that theſe very men were the firſt that, after the irruptions of the barbarians, introduced tales into Europe; that other nations have made nothing but copies or imitations of them; that Italy owes to them that *Boccace*, of whom ſhe makes her boaſt, and to whom ſhe attributes the diſcovery of a very pleaſing mode of writing; then, I imagine, a higher intereſt would be excited in their favour. What then would it be, if I declared, that many of thoſe tales are ſuch as I do not fear to give after *Boccace* and *La Fontaine*; and that, notwithſtanding the improvement that ſhould reſult from an interval of five centuries, all the fabuliſts that have followed them, with more art, more poetical ornament and a more finiſhed ſtile, have not ſo much ingenuity in their narrations, or ſo much intereſt and variety in their ſubjects?

The romances all bear a reſemblance to each other, the authors of them having adopted nearly the ſame plan, in aſſuming for their he-

ro or principal character a knight errant, whoſe buſineſs it was to atchieve exploits of valour. This narration could admit but one kind of incident. The fabuliſts on the other hand, whoſe poem was in general the relation of a ſingle ſtory, did not confine themſelves to any rule; whence a great variety in the aſpect of their productions. But a great advantage which theſe laſt had over the others conſiſted in their tales being intended for recital either in public places, or in ſelect circles of the nobility. They addreſſed themſelves then to the hearers, not only at the beginning, but often in the middle of the narration; which brought them nearer to the confines of dialogue, and gave them the air of dramatic action. To this they joined a ſimple, clear and ingenuous mode of narrating; genuine ſentiments and pictures of the human heart; none, indeed, of thoſe epiſodes into which the imagination of the author wanders occaſionally to relieve the reader in the courſe of a dry and tedious relation, but a number of thoſe ſmall acceſſory details, of thoſe ſecondary facts and circumſtances that contribute to bring the principal figure forward upon the canvas; and above all the honeſt ſimplicity of a narrator, who impoſes in the midſt of improbabilities

probabilities by his frankneſs and apparent regard for truth; diveſted of affectation, uſing no antitheſis, preſenting now and then a pithy proverbial ſaying, but never any of thoſe pointed maxims ſo common in modern compoſitions; in ſhort, with many beauties, diſplaying often a vicious taſte and various defects; but the defects at leaſt of genius.

Thoſe who read with attention muſt obſerve that every age and nation has not only its peculiar ſtile; but that in the works of pure imagination, as the romances, and even in thoſe that are compoſed of the moſt extravagant fictions, one diſcerns the manners, and the character of a nation deſcribed with as much truth, and often with more ſpirit than in their very hiſtories themſelves. This obſervation will appear to be founded on reaſon, when we reflect, that the writer in all the whimſical inventions of his brain, in all the operations that he conceives, is obliged to employ men, and ſuch men preciſely as he ſees about him. By this intereſting picture which the tales preſent of the manners and cuſtoms of their earlier ages, they will probably engage the attention ſtill more than they will pleaſe by their intrinſic

trinsic beauties. And it is not merely the general manners or those of the more elevated ranks in life that they represent. Calculated, like comedy, to describe the ordinary transactions of private life, they shew the nation in its undress, if I may be allowed the expression. Opinions, prejudices, superstitions, customs, turn of conversation, mode of courtship, all are to be found in them and in them alone.

The manners, which these stories exhibit, are not, I must confess, always so chaste and decent as I could wish them; and this circumstance, I have several times had occasion to regret in the course of my work. The expressions are often still worse, their texture being frequently of the most disgusting coarseness. Whether it proceeded from the simplicity of the times, or that they thought, as is observed in the *Romance of the Rose*, that there was no evil in naming what God had made; or whether it be attributed to the imperfection and infancy of the language, the spirit of libertinism not having then invented those ingenious turns of phrase and circumlocutions, by which in half concealing it, one renders the sin more seducing, these fabulists had

had no kind of reſerve; but, as the vulgar ſaying is, called a ſpade a ſpade: and it is not in the relation of the author only that the ear is ſhocked with theſe expreſſions; one is ſurprized to find them put into the mouths of virtuous maids, women of character, and fathers inſtructing their children.

After all, if we had nothing to object to theſe authors but the indecency of a few words they might eaſily be pardoned. But beſides the frequent coarſeneſs of the ſtile, ſome ſtories are in their ſubſtance reprehenſible; for libertiniſm and adultery never can be reconciled to ſound morals. Yet, however liable to objection the diction, the manners, or morals of theſe tales may be, it is my buſineſs to repreſent them ſuch as they are, ſince they are deſcriptive of the times. I ſhould hold myſelf no leſs culpable, as a tranſlator, in altering them, than I ſhould, as an author, in conceiving them. And, why ſhould they not be ſeen with the ſame eye with which we contemplate antient ſtatues, which in all countries are expoſed without veil to the public inſpection, and of which none advert to the immodeſty, becauſe hey are conſidered merely as monuments of

the

the art? Nevertheleſs, the reſpect, that is due to the reader, ſhall not be forgotten. Though all embelliſhment ſhall be rejected, and though to preſerve the character, the humour and ſimplicity of the fables, the language may ſometimes appear bald, quaint or approaching to vulgarity, I ſhall be careful not to admit any immodeſt or indecent expreſſion. There are ſeveral ſtories which, on this account, muſt be ſuppreſſed entirely; others, of which I ſhall preſent only an extract, or from which I ſhall retract the too licentious paſſages. That cannot be called ſtripping an author; but only putting him into a condition, that may enable him to appear in good company.

TALES, &c.

LANVAL.

An Heroic Tale.

ARTHUR *, according to annual cuſtom, held during the Whitſuntide holidays, a full court at Carduel. The liberality of the ſovereign was no

* King *Arthur*, his *knights of the round table*, and the enchanter *Merlin*, are well known in Engliſh fable. The French writers of romance, in addition to his Britiſh territories, give him the ſovereignty of *Little Brittany*; whither they occaſionally bring him to hold his court. Princes did not in thoſe ages keep their courts conſtantly open to their ſubjects, as at preſent; but, ſhut up with their families, and the officers of their houſehold,

leſs conſpicuous, than the magnificence of the ceremony on this occaſion. With a profuſe hand he diſtributed preſents among his faithful knights and adherents. One alone was denied any participation of the royal bounty: *Lanval*, a Breton knight, had long ſerved his prince with zeal and fidelity; but nevertheleſs had the misfortune to find his ſervices overlooked, and in a manner forgotten. *Lanval* was of royal deſcent;

hold, in towns or caſtles, they diſplayed their grandeur only on particular occaſions: this generally happened on the three or four grand feſtivals of the year; and theſe aſſemblies were called *plenary* or *full courts*. They were announced by heralds in the ſeveral diſtricts, cities, and villages, and not only the barons and prince's tenants, but ſtrangers alſo were invited to them. All manner of exhibitions, ſports, and recreations, took place at theſe meetings, and the ſovereigns vied in the diſplay of the greateſt magnificence and profuſion. The vaſſals, however, were obliged to contribute towards the expence of them by a gift, and the town in which they were held gave alſo its proportion.

and

and England did not boaſt a knight of ſuperior proweſs, or a more comely perſon. But neither aſking nor receiving penſion or gratuity from the ſovereign, his ſubſiſtence gradually diminiſhed, and his reſources became at length ſo entirely exhauſted, that his neceſſities drove him to ſeek for an aſylum at a diſtance from the court.

He departed then without communicating his deſign to any one, and took his courſe as chance directed him. The day was already more than half ſpent, when he found himſelf in a meadow, watered by a ſmall river. Here he diſmounted from his horſe, and leaving him to range the paſture, reclined upon the verdant brink, watched the ſlow progreſs of the ſtream, and muſed in ſilent grief on his misfortunes.

A ſudden noiſe ſoon awakened the knight from his reverie, when turning

his head, he perceived two beautiful damſels elegantly attired; after a gracious ſalute, they invited him in the name of their miſtreſs, into a tent which ſhe had prepared not far diſtant. *Lanval*, in aſtoniſhment and rapture, ſtarted up and followed the ladies, without thinking of his charger. He ſoon came to a ſilken pavillion, decorated at the top with a golden eagle, within which he diſcovered on a magnificent couch, the moſt accompliſhed female beauty, that had ever preſented itſelf to human eyes. A mantle bordered with ermine, and dyed with Alexandrian purple, covered the ſhoulders of the lady. The warmth of the weather had obliged her to throw it ſomewhat aſide; and the raviſhed eyes of the knight, through this opening, perceived a ſkin whiter than the ermine that touched it.

The knight continued for ſome time incapable of ſpeech or motion. The lady

lady called to him: "*Lanval*," ſaid ſhe, "it is you that I have been in ſearch of here; you have pleaſed me; I have conceived an affection for you, and will ſoon give you ſuch an inſtance of it, as ſhall cauſe *Arthur*, by whom you have been neglected, and all the ſovereigns of the earth, to envy your lot."

This tender declaration, like a ſpark of fire, kindled the paſſions of the knight, and converted his aſtoniſhment into love and admiration. He anſwered the lady with an aſſurance of his extreme joy at having obtained her eſteem, and of his readineſs to exerciſe the utmoſt efforts of his valour in her ſervice.

The damſels then entered with a rich and ſumptuous habit for the knight. A delicious repaſt was ſerved up; after which the fairy † indulged her

† Although we find various traditions of magic among

lover in the full accompliſhment of his wiſhes. He would fain have continued in this delightful retirement; but when night approached, the lady addreſſed him in this manner: "I cannot ſuffer you to remain any longer here; ariſe, return to your court, and diſplay there a magnificence worthy of me, and of yourſelf.

among the ancients, yet the adventures of what we call *Fairy-land*, are certainly derived from the orientals. From their Genii have proceeded our Fairies, a ſpecies of nymphs of a ſuperior order to thoſe female magicians, who nevertheleſs retained the ſame title. Our ancient writers of romance uſed *Fairyiſm* to ſatiety. We know the uſe that has been made of this invention by two principal epic poets of Italy, and we muſt acknowledge, that when employed with taſte and judgment, this machinery opens a vaſt field for the imagination to roam in, and may be the ſource of infinite beauties.

There were two kind of fairies; the firſt, as was obſerved above, celeſtial nymphs, the others infernal ſorcereſſes, or women ſkilled in magic, as *Morgana*, and the other diſciples of *Merlin*.

What-

Whatever expences you may incur, gold ſhall not be wanting to defray them. Whenever you wiſh for my company, (and I hope it will never be in an improper place) I permit you to call on me, and I ſhall inſtantly preſent myſelf before your eyes, inviſible to all others; but beware that none ſuſpect your happineſs. I require the moſt inviolable ſecrecy, and I give you notice, that from the moment you tranſgreſs it, you loſe my friendſhip, and will never ſee me more." On this ſhe embraced him, and took her leave. His horſe awaited him at the entrance of the pavillion; and he departed in ſuch aſtoniſhment at his adventure, as to look back frequently with ſolicitude, to convince himſelf that all had not been illuſion.

On his return to Carduel, he loaded with preſents all who had ſerved him, redeemed priſoners, equipped and ſupplied the wants of poor knights, maintained

tained minſtrels, made preſents to cruſaders, and pilgrims; yet his purſe ſuffered no diminution. But what was ſtill more gratifying to him, whenever love incited, whether by night or day, he gave the ſignal to the fairy, who inſtantly appeared at his ſummons.

But this happineſs was not to laſt for ever. At the feſtival of St. John, a great number of knights aſſembled at the caſtle. After ſupper they deſcended into the Court-yard to walk. The Queen, who had a ſecret paſſion for *Lanval*, and who had perceived him among the knights, from the windows of her tower, propoſed that the ladies ſhould without ceremony deſcend likewiſe. The two companies joined; they paired for dancing, toyed, and gave themſelves up to mirth and pleaſure.

Lanval alone was uneaſy, not being able to baniſh the recollection of his miſtreſs,

miſtreſs, and longed to make his eſcape to her. The Queen, who had often wiſhed to find him alone, ſeized the preſent opportunity, and calling him to her, ſpoke in the following terms; "*Lanval*, I have always entertained an eſteem for you, and it is your own fault, if I do not make you a ſurrender of my heart. tell me; would it not be acceptable to you?" The knight's affections were already pledged; and even, were they not, he had too much loyalty to think of an injury towards his ſovereign. He heſitated—he demurred—at length, after ſome tender ſolicitations, the Queen became enraged at his coldneſs, and caſt out ſuch bitter invectives againſt him, that he was provoked to acknowledge he had a miſtreſs—that his miſtreſs was ſo pre-eminent in beauty, as to be above all competition, and that even one of her female attendants far exceeded her majeſty in charms.

This

This provoking anſwer worked up the Queen's indignation to fury. She retired to her chamber, and declared that ſhe would not leave her couch, till the King afforded her vengeance on *Lanval*. *Arthur* was then engaged in the chace. On his return at night, the Queen threw herſelf at his feet, and implored ſatisfaction of an inſolent vaſſal, who had not only had the effrontery to offer her his addreſſes, but had, on her refuſal, dared to inſult her, and to avow that he had a miſtreſs, whoſe attendants were to be preferred to her. Seduced by the tears of his Conſort, *Arthur* reſolved on the deſtruction of *Lanval*, and ſent three of his truſty barons to arreſt him.

Lanval had left the caſtle full of apprehenſion. Though he had not named his miſtreſs to the Queen, he had yet ſpoken of his happineſs, and dreaded the reſentment of the fairy. Scarcely had he got home, before he gave the accuſtomed ſignal;

ſignal; but on this occaſion it was not anſwered. It was in vain that he poured forth lamentations and ſighs, curſed his indiſcretion, and ſued for pardon: his vows were uttered to the wind! The barons found him in this melancholy ſituation, when they brought him the royal mandate to appear at court in his defence. With deſpair at heart, and little ſolicitude concerning a life that was now become odious, he followed them to the caſtle.

Immediately on his appearance, the king began to reproach him in the moſt pointed terms. *Lanval*, full of ſurprize, made ſolemn proteſtations of his innocence, reſpecting any attempt to ſeduce the honour of the Queen, but acknowledged the petulant expreſſion that had eſcaped him in his anger, and ſubmitted himſelf to the judgment of the court. In conſequence, the proper number of judges were choſen among his peers.

The

The day fixed for the trial being arrived, the barons aſſembled, and Arthur himſelf preſided at the board. Animated by the Queen, who was preſent, he ſtrove to infuſe the ſame ſpirit into the judges. The accuſed knight was interrogated, and was commanded to retire, that the bench might proceed to judgment. But theſe brave warriors felt a repugnance to condemn * to death a knight without blemiſh, a youth of ſo much comelineſs and promiſe, far removed from his native country, and without ſupport or connection in a ſtrange court. Several were for impriſonment; and one of them, in hopes of ſaving the culprit, having propoſed that

* This might be thought a puniſhment in the preſent century quite out of proportion with the crime of aſſerting that there were handſomer women than the Queen; but it ſhould be remembered, that it happened in a romantic age, when an inſult offered to a lady was conſidered as the moſt atrocious crime.

he

he ſhould produce his miſtreſs, in order that after compariſon, they might determine whether he was juſt in preferring her to the Queen; this opinion was unanimouſly adopted. Unfortunately it was no longer in his power to ſee her: and this laſt expedient only ſerved to convince him, that he was now deprived of every reſource.

They were proceeding to judgment, on *Lanval*'s declining the award, when ſuddenly two damſels mounted on grey palfreys appeared before them, of ſuch extraordinary beauty, that the barons concluded one of them to be the ſo much boaſted miſtreſs of *Lanval*. They were preſented to the King, and announced to him the arrival of their miſtreſs. An inſtant afterwards two others appeared, of majeſtic ſtature, and ſtill more beautiful than the former. They were very ſuperbly dreſſed, and mounted upon Spaniſh mules. The Monarch

went himſelf to conduct them, and returned quickly to expedite judgment, leſt the knight ſhould eſcape his vengeance.

But loud ſhouts of joy and acclamations from without, again ſtopped the proceedings of the judges. They looked out, and ſaw approaching upon a horſe whiter than ſnow a lady of ſupernatural beauty. Men and women, knights and commonalty, all in ſhort who inhabited the environs of the caſtle, ran to attend her in her progreſs, and nothing could be heard around her, but a confuſed murmur of admiration and encomium.

The friends of *Lanval*, doubting not but that was the lady, from whom alone he was to expect relief, came in haſte to announce the fortunate arrival. Seated apart, a prey to anguiſh and ſorrowful reflections, he waited the ſtroke of death with reſignation, as he had loſt all that could

could render life ſupportable. At the diſcourſe of his friends, he raiſed up his eyes, and cried, "it is ſhe! I die happy, ſince I have once more beheld her!"

The ſovereign, with all his court, aroſe to receive the lady. She entered the palace, ſaluted the aſſembly, and ſpoke in the following manner: "King, and you, O barons, liſten to me! *Arthur*, I have loved one of your knights, on whom I have been obliged to confer that reward, that ſhould have proceeded from you. He was guilty of an act of diſobedience, and I was inclined to puniſh him, by leaving him for a time on the brink of death; but I am now come to extricate him from it, in return for his fidelity. Barons, you required my preſence to condemn, or abſolve him; here I am! now compare, and give judgment. They all exclaimed that *Lanval* was in the right, and with an unanimous voice acquitted him. The fairy then

departed with her damſels. The knight mounting on ſome marble ſteps, that were placed at the gate of the caſtle, vaulted upon the fairy's horſe as ſhe paſſed, and went along with her.

The Bretons give out that ſhe conducted him to a charming iſland, named Avalon, where their love was crowned with happineſs. It is certain at leaſt, that he has never ſince been heard of. *

* In the *Arabian Nights*, *Ahmed*, ſon to the Sultan of the Indies, is conducted, in like manner with *Lanval*, to the magic caſtle of the Fairy *Pari-Banou*, who is in love with him. He marries her, and takes up his abode at her caſtle. But in no other particular have the two ſtories any reſemblance.

THE PEDLAR, A COMIC STORY.

A RICH baron, of very extenſive poſſeſſions, had throughout his territories eſtabliſhed ſo ſtrict a police, that rogues and thieves durſt not make their appearance in them, but had through his ſeverity been driven to commit their depredations in other quarters.

On a certain day, he gave public notice of a new fair. Conſiderable merchants accordingly brought their carriages loaded with goods from the adjacent towns, and among them a dealer in ſmall wares appeared, whoſe parcel, being rather too heavy for his own ſhoulders, was borne by a pack-horſe. When he came to unload and diſplay his effects for ſale, he found his horſe an incumbrance. He could not afford his ſubſiſtence at the livery ſtables, and to let

him graze at random in the meadows, would be at the risk of losing him. A merchant, who was standing by, soon relieved the pedlar from his embarrassment. "Follow my example," said he, "go and put your beast under the protection of the baron, and then you may sleep in quiet. You will no where find such protection and security as here. Should any man be daring enough to steal the horse, he would inevitably be brought to the gallows; and you would have beside full compensation for the loss."

The pedlar derived comfort from this assurance. He went and took his horse to the field; but whether he misunderstood the merchant, for he was a man of great simplicity and ignorance, or thought two protectors better than one; he began to mutter a few ejaculations and prayers, to recommend the preservation of his animal to God, as well as to the baron, imploring that it might be their

joint

joint care not to ſuffer him to leave the meadow.

As it happened, he had no reaſon to complain that his prayer was neglected; for the horſe never left the paſture: but in the night a wild beaſt broke in, devoured the animal, and made ſo complete a meal of him, that when the pedlar returned to fetch him away, he could find nothing but the bones. This accident was likely to be his ruin; for no longer able to purſue his buſineſs at the fairs, he could exiſt no other way than by begging. In his deſpair he almoſt envied the lot of the robbers, who had been hanged up by the baron. Recollecting at laſt, what the merchant had ſaid of this lord's humanity and juſtice, he went to lay the misfortune before him, and endeavour to move his compaſſion.

He preſented himſelf then in tears before

fore the baron: "Sire," ſaid he, "may Heaven avert from you the misfortune that I have undergone." The baron was affected at his complaint. "Friend," ſaid he, "I wiſh it were in my power to alleviate your unhappineſs. What is the cauſe of your grief?" "Ah! Sire, I had a horſe that conſtituted my whole property. I was informed on my arrival here, that if I commended it to your care, I need be under no ſolicitude, for that you would ſecure me from any loſs by it. I accordingly put it into your meadow, commending it to God's protection, and to yours; and, alas! a ſavage animal has devoured it. I am now ruined without reſource, unleſs you will have compaſſion on me." "Well, well, that is but a trifling miſhap," ſaid the baron ſmiling; "ſo ſmall a matter, my good friend, ſhould not give you ſo much uneaſineſs. What was the price of your horſe?" "By my hopes of heaven, Sire,

and

and the faith you owe your miſtreſs, I valued it at ſixty pence *." "Well," ſaid the baron, "there are thirty. If you had placed it ſolely under my protection, I ſhould have held myſelf bound to pay the whole ſum; but as you have alſo called upon that of God, it is but juſt that he ſhould come in for his half of the damages, and I adviſe you, without delay, to go and make your claim."

The pedlar thought the obſervation but too well founded, and was out of humour with himſelf, for not having put his horſe entirely under the protection of the baron. The thirty-pence afforded him, however, ſome conſolation. He then loaded himſelf with his pack, and

* This ſum may appear ſmall even to burleſque. But at the time this ſtory was compoſed, viz. in the 12th century, an ox might have been purchaſed at that price. And we may imagine the pedlar's pack-horſe to have been none of the moſt valuable.

pur-

purſued his journey, ſtill diſſatisfied, and regretting that he could not deviſe means to recover the remainder of his loſſes.

Intent on theſe reflections he met a monk, mounted on a handſome gelding. He walked directly up to him, ſtopped him, and aſked to whom he belonged. "I am a ſervant of God," replied the gentleman of the cowl. "Ho! ho! brother, you are welcome; ſince you are a ſervant of God, I muſt inform you that he owes me thirty-pence, and beg that you will diſcharge the debt for your maſter, and that immediately." And in ſaying this, he ſeized on the monk's cloak, and ſtripped him of it. The monk, who found that he was overmatched, cried out againſt the injuſtice of this procedure, and claiming the privilege of his profeſſion, propoſed that their diſpute ſhould be refered to the deciſion of the lord paramount. The

pedlar

pedlar agreed to this propoſal; and they made their way together to the caſtle.

"Sire," ſaid the ſhorn votary of the cloiſter, "I am come to complain of an offence committed in your territories, and to demand juſtice on this villain; who has not only dared to lay violent hands on a prieſt, but under I know not what pretence, that God owes him thirty-pence, inſiſts on payment from me, and to enforce it, has ſeized upon my mantle. I requeſt that he may be ordered to return it, and that he may be puniſhed for his audacity." "Sire," retorted the pedlar, "this man, though he calls himſelf a prieſt, has neither honeſty nor truth in him. He here calls upon you to puniſh me; and but juſt now, on the highway, he agreed that we ſhould repair to you as arbitrator between us."

This laſt expreſſion irritated the monk, who inſiſted that none but God had a right

right to judge him. "Since that is the caſe," ſaid the baron in a jocular manner, "if you will have no other judge but God, go and lay your ſuit before him; I cannot preſume to meddle in it. Mean while, I would adviſe you to pay this man, who ſeems to be a robuſt, determined fellow, the money he demands of you; not forgetting that it will hereafter be in your power to have recourſe for a compenſation to your maſter." The monk could make no further plea, but paid the thirty-pence to the pedlar: whether he afterwards made it good out of his maſter's effects, it is not ſo clearly known.

THE

THE NORMAN BACHELOR.

ON the year that *Acre* * was taken, a pleaſant adventure happened in Normandy. A bachelor † of that province had one morning nothing for his dinner ‡ but a halfpenny loaf. To make his ſcanty meal the more palatable, he went into a tavern and called for a pennyworth of wine. The maſter of the

* This town was taken by Philip Auguſtus, and Richard Cœur-de-Lion in 1191.

† A bachelor meant, in the days of Chivalry, a probationary knight, or one between that degree and an eſquire. It was alſo uſed to ſignify a poor gentleman, and in that ſenſe it is here to be taken.

‡ It was the cuſtom then to dine at ten o'clock in the morning, and to ſup at five in the afternoon. Thus in the ſtory of *Lanval*, we hear of a company going out *after ſupper*, and walking *till night*.

houſe, who was a man of rough and boorish manners, came and preſented to the gentleman, with great rudeneſs, the liquor in a cup; and in handing it to him, ſpilt near half of it on the floor. To complete his inſolence, he obſerved to him, "you are going to be a rich man Mr. bachelor; for liquor ſpilt is a ſign of good luck."

To break out into a rage againſt ſo contemptible a brute, would have been beneath a gentleman: the Norman took his meaſures with better management, and more addreſs. He had ſtill a halfpenny remaining in his purſe; he gave it to the tavern-keeper, and deſired to have a piece of cheeſe to eat with his bread. The vintner takes it with a ſneering air, and goes to the cellar to bring what was required. The bachelor, during the abſence of the vintner, goes to the wine caſk, turns the cock, and lets the wine run out upon the floor. The other,

other, on his return, finding his wine running out and overflowing the room, quickly makes up to the barrel, and having ſtopped the cock, ruſhes upon the Norman and ſeizes him by the collar, vowing vengeance for the loſs of his wine. The Norman, however, being the ſtronger, raiſes the other by the middle, and throws him among the bottles, a great number of which are broken, and proceeds to inflict the merited chaſtiſement, till he is interrupted by the entry of ſome neighbours.

The affair was notwithſtanding carried before the ſovereign, Count *Henry*. The vintner ſpoke firſt, and demanded reparation of his damage. The prince, before he condemned the knight, aſked him what he had to urge in his defence. The latter then related the affair exactly as it had fallen out, and concluded with ſaying: "Sire, this man aſſured me, that wine ſpilt portended good fortune, and

that, having waſted half my meaſure, he had put me into a fair way to become a rich man. Gratitude demanded a return on my part, and as I did not chuſe to be out-done in generoſity, I ſpilled him half a tun."

All the courtiers applauded the conduct, and the declaration of the bachelor. The Count himſelf laughed heartily, and diſmiſſed both parties, ſaying that what was ſpilt could not be gathered up again.

THE TWO TRADESMEN AND THE CLOWN.

TWO traders were proceeding on a pilgrimage. A country-man, who was profecuting the ſame journey, having joined them on the road, they agreed to travel together, and to make a joint ſtock of their proviſions. But when arrived within a day's journey of the holy place, it was almoſt wholly expended, ſo that they had nothing left, but a little flour barely ſufficient to make a ſmall cake. The perfidious traders entered into a plot together to cheat their companion of his ſhare, and, from his ſtupid air, imagined they could dupe him without difficulty. "We muſt come to ſome agreement," ſaid one of the citizens. "What will not aſſuage the hunger of three, may ſatisfy a ſingle perſon, and I vote that it be allotted to one of us only. But that each may have

a fair chance, I propoſe that we all three lie down and fall aſleep, and that the bread may be the lot of him, who on awaking, ſhall have had the moſt curious dream.

The other citizen, as we may readily ſuppoſe, approved vaſtly this ſuggeſtion. The countryman alſo ſignified his approbation, and pretended to give completely into the ſnare. They then made the bread, put it on the fire to bake, and lay down. But our tradeſmen were ſo much fatigued with their journey, that without intending it, they fell ſoon into a profound ſlumber. The clown, more cunning, waited only this opportunity; got up without noiſe, went and ate the bread, and then compoſed himſelf to reſt.

Soon after one of the citizens awaked, and calling to his companions; "Friends," ſaid he, "liſten to my dream.

dream. I thought myſelf tranſported by two angels into Hell. For a long time they kept me ſuſpended over the abyſs of everlaſting fire. There, I was a witneſs to the torments of the damned." ——"And I," ſaid the other, "dreamed that the gates of Heaven were opened to me. The arch-angels, Michael and Gabriel, after raiſing me up into the ſky, carried me before the throne of God. There was I a ſpectator of his glory."— And then the dreamer began to recount the wonders of Paradiſe, as the other had of the infernal abodes.

The country-man, mean while, though he heard perfectly well what they ſaid, pretended to be ſtill aſleep. They went to rouſe him from his ſlumber; when he, affecting the ſurprize of a man ſuddenly diſturbed from reſt, cried out, "What is the matter?" "Why it is only your fellow-travellers. What! do you not recollect us? Come, ariſe, and inform us

of

of your dream." "My dream? Oh! I have had a very droll one, and one that I am ſure will afford you ſome diverſion. When I ſaw you both carried away, the one to Heaven, the other to Hell, I thought that I had loſt you for ever. I then got up, and as I expected never to ſee you more, I went and demoliſhed the loaf.

THE KNIGHT AND THE TRAP DOOR.

IN former times, a gentleman of ſome diſtinction, of the kingdom of Montbergier, a knight and noted for his feats of valour, had, in his ſleep, a very ſingular dream. He fancied that he ſaw a lady of extraordinary beauty, and conceived a ſudden paſſion for her. He knew nothing either of her name or country; but her perſon and her features had ſtruck him ſo forcibly, and were ſo ſtrongly imprinted on his memory, that he had no doubt of recognizing her in any part of the world.

By a fatality no leſs ſingular the lady dreamt that love had united her affections with thoſe of a knight, whoſe name ſhe knew not, but whoſe figure was ſo ſtrongly engraved in her boſom, that change or time could not efface it.

It certainly does not appear to be the act of a very wise or prudent man, to go upon an enterprize in consequence of a dream. Yet it is what our knight resolved to do. In order to meet the accomplishment of his adventure, he prepared an equipage, loaded a war-horse with gold and silver, and began his journey. Several months elapsed, while he was beating the country ineffectually, without any check to his hopes, or any abatement to his ardour. At length he discovered near the sea coast, a castle, surrounded with ramparts recently constructed, with a tower of prodigious strength, of which the walls were thirty feet thick, and about a bow shot in heighth. The lord of the mansion was a rich and powerful duke, jealous of a beautiful woman, whom he kept confined in this fortress, secured by eighteen doors with iron bars, and locks of vast strength and intricacy. He committed the care of the gates to no deputy, but

shut

ſhut and opened them himſelf. He always carried the keys about him, and would not entruſt them to any living being.

On his entrance into the town, the knight caſt his eyes accidentally upon the tower, and perceived at one of the windows a face that he recollected : it was the lady of his dream, her whom he ſought with ſo much anxiety, and whom he had loved before he ſaw her. She alſo had deſcried him at a conſiderable diſtance, and knew his perſon. So eager was ſhe on the diſcovery, that nothing but the fear of her jealous huſband prevented her from calling to him aloud; reſtraining, however, the impetuoſity of her paſſion, ſhe went no further than to ſing a love ſong, that might give the traveller an intimation of her emotions at ſeeing him.

The knight, although impatient to reply,

reply, that he might not ruin his project, appeared as if he heard nothing. He instantly repaired to the castle, presented himself to the lord, and begged that he might be employed in his service, giving himself out for a gentleman, who had killed a knight in a tournament, and was by a prosecution from the relations of the deceased, obliged to quit his native country. "You are welcome, said the duke; I am at this moment at war with enemies who are committing depredations on my frontiers: you may be useful to me, and I willingly accept the offer of your services."

The very next day, the knight had occasion to exercise his valour. His arm, strung by love, performed wonders. In less than three months the enemies of the duke were either killed, dispersed or made prisoners, the country rescued, and the roads free. The conqueror, in recompense, was made on his return the duke's

duke's chamberlain; and then he thought ſeriouſly of putting into execution the project which his paſſion had ſuggeſted to carry him into the preſence of the ducheſs.

Under ſome plauſible pretext, he perſuaded the duke to make him the grant of a piece of ground in the court-yard, with permiſſion to build a ſmall lodge upon his own plan. This he obtained without difficulty. He cauſed then to be erected at a little diſtance from the tower, but not ſo near as to excite jealouſy in the duke, a ſmall houſe with a drain and back door. When all the walls were finiſhed and the roof covered, he ſeduced the architect by a bribe, and ordered him to make a ſubterraneous paſſage to communicate with the tower. When he had penetrated to the floor, he contrived a trap-door, which was made with ſo much art, and ſhut ſo

cloſely, that the keeneſt eye could not diſcern it.

He found no difficulty after that to make his way into the tower, to ſee his lady, and to attain the ſummit of his wiſhes. On his leaving the tower, ſhe gave him as a pledge for her fidelity, a very valuable ring, with which the duke had preſented her. The knight, who had projected another plot, no ſooner was in the preſence of the huſband, than he endeavoured by every means to diſplay the new acquiſition upon his finger. The jealous duke changed colour at the ſight. He nevertheleſs had prudence enough not to drop a hint of his ſuſpicions to the chamberlain: but went immediately to the tower, in order to interrogate the ducheſs.

The lover ſuſpected it; flew immediately to his ſubterraneous paſſage, and while the other was opening and ſhutting

ting with great preciſion his eighteen doors, he had time to enter into the tower through his trap-door and to replace the ring.

The huſband's firſt demand was to ſee it. At this requiſition, the ducheſs at firſt affected infinite ſurprize. But when the duke inſiſted on ſeeing it, and accompanied his command with oaths and menaces, the lady, without ſaying another word, or appearing anxious to know the motive for his curioſity, opened the box, in which ſhe had juſt before laid up the ring, and preſented it to him. That was enough to reſtore her to his confidence, and to baniſh ſuſpicion upon that head. He concluded that the chamberlain had got a ring that much reſembled it, and went to reſt in perfect tranquility of mind.

On the following day he took it into his head to hunt in the foreſt, and de-

fired the chamberlain to be in readineſs to attend him. "Sire, anſwered the knight, have the goodneſs to diſpenſe with my attendance to day. My miſtreſs is this inſtant arrived. During my abſence ſhe has found the means to compound with my proſecutors; and this intelligence, which ſhe has brought me in perſon, obliges me to quit your ſervice, and to leave the caſtle to-morrow. But, Sire, ſhe is deſirous to make her acknowledgements for your bounty to me; and begs that you will ſup with her to-night, on your return from the chace." The duke aſſented. Now this was a trick, which the two lovers had concerted; and the pretended miſtreſs, with whom the duke was to ſup, was no other than the ducheſs herſelf.

In the evening ſhe paſſed through the trap-door into the chamberlain's lodge. There ſhe found a rich dreſs, which he had provided to diſguiſe her a little.

The

The duke, on entering with his attendants, ſaw a lady of extreme beauty, and dreſſed with uncommon ſplendour. The knight taking her by the hand and preſenting her, ſaid, "Sire, receive my miſtreſs, the ſole object of my love, and one whom I hope ſoon to call my wife." Scarcely had the duke caſt his eyes upon her face, but he thought he recognized his wife's features, and was thrown into the utmoſt conſternation. The lady, without appearing to perceive it, took her ſeat at the table. She then deſired the duke to ſit down by her, and preſſed him to eat; but he could not ſwallow a morſel. A thouſand confuſed ideas floated in his brain. During the whole time of ſupper, he had his eyes fixed on her like one enchanted, and wondered, how it could be poſſible for his conſort to eſcape out of a tower ſo ſtrong, ſo high and ſo well ſecured.

On riſing from the table, he retired

again to ſatisfy his ſuſpicions. The duchess, at the ſame time, threw off haſtily her rich dreſs; and paſſing through the trap-door, got to her apartment in the tower; where ſhe placed herſelf in bed, and pretended to be in a profound ſleep. The duke was very agreeably ſurprized, after having opened and examined all his doors, to find the dutcheſs in bed. He thought of this affair, juſt as he did of the former, conſidering that it was as likely for two women, as for two rings, to bear a cloſe reſemblance to each other. This reflection reſtored his peace of mind. He alſo then lay down, and paſſed the night with the dutcheſs, little imagining that this was to be the laſt!

The knight had before-hand made all neceſſary preparation for his departure. A veſſel, privately equipped, attended in the harbour. The wind was favour-

favourable, and every thing ſeconded his deſigns.

Early the next morning, our lover came to take his leave of the duke, juſt as he was going to matins, and reſpectfully aſked of him a parting favour—that of being a witneſs to his marriage. "My bride," ſaid he, requires your approbation of our union, and I myſelf wiſh to receive my happineſs from your hands." The duke having ſignified his readineſs to comply with this requeſt, the knight haſtened to conduct the dutcheſs, who waited for him at the lodge. She came covered with a hood, and in as cloſe a diſguiſe as poſſible. Two knights attended her to the church, when the duke, fully cured of his ſuſpicions, preſented her in marriage to the chamberlain. From the church the newly married couple repaired to the veſſel, in which they were to take their departure. The duke with all

all his attendants insisted on accompanying them himself. He gave his hand to help the bride upon deck, and rallying her on the joy that was perceptible in her countenance, bid her adieu with good humoured gallantry. But this pleasantry did not last long. For returning to the tower, he soon discovered who the lady was that he had given away in marriage, and who shewed such alacrity at her departure. She was gone; and all that remained for him, was the shame and vexation of having been duped so egregiously.

THE CHILD MELTED BY THE SUN.

AN active and induſtrious Merchant, had occaſion often to be abroad for a conſiderable time together, in the purſuit of his traffic. During one of his voyages, which laſted for more than two years, it happened that his wife became enamoured of a young neighbour. Love, which is reſtrained with difficulty, ſoon brought them together; but they managed their affairs in ſo bungling a manner, that, at the expiration of about nine months, the merchant's wife found herſelf for the firſt time a mother.

The huſband, on his return, was greatly ſurprized to find this addition to his family, and aſked his wife to what accident they were indebted for it. "Sir, ſaid ſhe, I happened one day to be reclining above ſtairs at the window, and giving

giving vent to my grief for your abſence. It was in the winter ſeaſon, and there was at the time a heavy fall of ſnow. As I caſt up my ſtreaming eyes to heaven, and heaved a ſigh on thinking of you, a flake of ſnow accidentally made its way into my mouth, and I immediately found that I had conceived this child whom you now ſee." The merchant, on hearing this ſtory, did not betray the leaſt ſymptoms of diſcontent or ill humour. " Thanks be to God, ſaid he; I wiſhed for an heir, and he has ſent me one: I am ſatisfied, and thankful for his bounty." He, indeed, thenceforward affected the moſt entire ſatisfaction, never offered the leaſt reproach to his wife, but lived in the ſame good underſtanding with her as before: nevertheleſs this was all diſſimulation—he had formed inwardly a reſolution to be one day or another amply revenged.

The child, however, grew up, and had

had attained the age of fifteen, when the merchant, whoſe thoughts were ſtill occupied with this project of revenge, at laſt thought ſeriouſly of putting it into execution. "Wife, ſaid he one day, you muſt not be afflicted, if I once more take my leave of you for a time. I am going upon a long journey to-morrow; and I deſire you will get ready my baggage, and that of my ſon: for I mean to take him with me, that he may acquire ſome knowledge of trade while he is young." Alas! replied the mother, I am much grieved to hear that you are going to take him abroad ſo ſoon; but ſince it is for your ſatisfaction and his advantage, I ſubmit. God be with you both, and bring you back in ſafety. Matters thus arranged, the merchant ſet off early the next morning, and took the child of ſnow along with him.

It is needleſs to give the particulars of the

the journey, or an account of the countries through which he paſſed. It is enough to mention, that on his arrival at *Genoa*, he found a *Saracen* merchant bound for *Alexandria*, to whom he ſold the boy as a ſlave. Afterwards, having ſettled his own affairs at his leiſure, he returned home.

The imagination of an hundred poets combined, would not give you an adequate deſcription of the diſtraction of the mother, when ſhe ſaw the merchant return without her ſon. She tore her hair and fell into a fit of phrenzy. At length, having recovered herſelf, ſhe conjured her huſband to tell her without reſerve what had happened to the youth. The huſband expected all this uproar: and therefore was not puzzled for an anſwer. "Wife, ſaid he, one cannot arrive to my age, without having had experience enough in the world, to know the neceſſity of reconciling one's-

ſelf to whatever may happen. For what do we gain by giving way to our afflictions? liſten with fortitude to the misfortune that happened to us in the country whence I come. Your ſon and myſelf were on a very ſultry day, climbing up a ſteep and lofty mountain. It was about noon; the ſun was vertical over our heads, and burned like fire. When, behold, on a ſudden your ſon began to diſſolve, and melted before my eyes! I would have offered him aſſiſtance, but knew that it would be in vain; for I recollected that you told me he was made of ſnow."

The wife knew perfectly well the merchant's meaning. She durſt not, however, break out; but was obliged to ſwallow the liquor that ſhe had brewed.

THE HOUSEBREAKER, THAT WANTED TO DESCEND UPON A RAY OF THE MOON.

A Robber had formed the deſign to break into the houſe of a rich inhabitant of the town, in which he committed his depredations. For this purpoſe, he climbed at night upon the roof, and there waited till all the family and ſervants being aſleep, he might take the opportunity of ſlipping into the houſe. But the maſter, although he had lain down, was awake, and had perceived our adventurer by the light of the moon. He was a ſharp, cunning fellow, and was determined to play a trick upon the thief. "Harke, ſaid he, ſpeaking low to his wife; aſk me by what method I acquired my property. I ſhall make a difficulty to anſwer you; but preſs me upon the ſubject, inſiſt upon knowing, and do not let me repoſe, till I have diſcloſed

cloſed it to you: but, above all, remember to ſpeak out as loud as you can."

The wife, without enquiring into her huſband's motive, aſked the queſtion, as he had required her to do. He anſwered in a myſterious manner, that it was a ſecret which he meant to conceal for ever within his own breaſt; that it was no affair of hers how he had amaſſed his wealth; it was enough for her to enjoy in quiet the affluence it afforded her. She repeated her interrogatories, exactly as the huſband had directed, while he continued the ſame reſerve. She preſſed him, however, ſo often upon the ſubject, that at length ſeeming to yield to her importunities, he avowed that he had been a thief, and that he had made a large fortune by the profeſſion. "What, Sir, ſaid the wife, have you been a thief and never yet ſuſpected of any diſhoneſt practices!—The reaſon is, that I had

a moſt ingenious tutor in the buſineſs, ſuch an one as we ſhall not find a match for in a hurry. He robbed only in the night; and by the ſecret which he poſſeſſed, of uſing certain cabaliſtical words, he was ſure of robbing without hazard. For example, if he wanted to procure an entrance any where, he pronounced the myſterious word ſeven times before the moon, when inſtantly a ray ſhot from that luminary and carried him upon the roof; for it was always by the roof that he entered. In caſe he wiſhed to deſcend, he repeated the magic word, and darted upon the ray that brought him gently to the earth. I inherited his ſecret, ſince you oblige me to avow it; and between you and me, I had no occaſion to make uſe of it long. I cannot doubt that, anſwered the wife. It is a treaſure that you poſſeſs; and if ever I ſhould have any friend or relation in embarraſſed circumſtances, I ſhould be extremely anxious to let them partake

take of it." She then entreated her husband to admit her into the secret. He objected for a long time, begged her to desist and let him sleep; but after much solicitation, he at last informed her, that the secret consisted in repeating seven times the word *Seïl*. He then wished his wife a good night, and began to snore as if he was in a profound sleep.

The robber, who had not lost a word of all this conversation, could not resist the desire he felt to try the virtue of the charm. After repeating the word *Seïl* seven times, with great eagerness, he threw out his arms and sprang from the roof; but instead of being borne upon a ray, he fell straight to the earth, and broke his thigh. At the noise of his descent, the master of the house, pretending to awake, cried out with the voice of one affrighted, who is there? "Ah, master, said the unlucky rogue, it is a

man to whom *Seïl* has not been so serviceable as to you."

He was immediately seized, and delivered the next day to the judges, who condemned him to the gallows.

THE

THE THREE HUNCH-BACKED MINSTRELS.

AT Douay lived a burgeſs, eſteemed for his prudence and his probity throughout the town. Unfortunately for him, he was not in very affluent circumſtances; but he had a daughter, whoſe beauty and accompliſhments made him forget the ſcantineſs of his fortune.

On the banks of a river, and at a ſmall diſtance from the town, there ſtood a caſtle; at the foot of which, was a bridge acroſs the river. The owner of this caſtle was a hump-backed object of deformity. Nature had exhauſted her ingenuity in the formation of his whimſical figure. She has provided this baboon, in lieu of ſenſe, with a monſtrous, large head, which was in a manner loſt between two high ſhoulders, and

covered

covered with a prodigious quantity of thick hair. His neck was ſhort, and his face ſo ſhockingly deformed, as almoſt to terrify the beholder.

Such was the picture of the Caſtellan; who notwithſtanding all his ugline∫s took it into his head to be enamoured of the burge∫s's beautiful daughter. He went ſtill farther. He even ventured to demand her in marriage; and as he was the richeſt man in the diſtrict (for he had employed his whole life in amaſſing wealth) the poor girl was delivered up to him. But this acquiſition did not add to his happineſs. Full of jealouſy, from a conſciouſneſs of his perſonal defects, he had no reſt or tranquility of mind either by day or night. He was perpetually going backward and forward, prying and watching in every corner, and never ſuffering any one to come within the doors, except ſuch as brought

brought ſomething that was wanted in the houſe.

One of the Chriſtmas holidays, as he was thus ſtanding centry at his gate, he was accoſted by three hunch-backed minſtrels. Theſe men had made a party together on purpoſe to amuſe themſelves at the expence of their rich brother in deformity. They ſaluted him in that quality, and demanded brotherly entertainment, and at the ſame time, to demonſtrate the affinity, each diſplaying his hump. This pleaſantry, which one would ſuppoſe could not have been very acceptable to the lord of the caſtle, was nevertheleſs extremely well received. He conducted the minſtrels to his kitchen, ſerved them with fowl, peaſe and bacon, and even gave them each at parting a piece of money. But when they were at the gate, he called out to them: "obſerve this houſe attentively, and take care that you never think of ſetting foot in it again; for

for if ever I catch you here, you ſhall take your laſt draught at the bottom of that river."

Our muſicians laughed at this threat of the Caſtellan, and took the road towards the town, ſinging, dancing and ſkipping in a ridiculous manner, to ſhew their contempt of him. He, on his part, without beſtowing the leaſt attention on them, went out and took his walk towards the country.

His lady, who ſaw him croſs the bridge, and who had heard the minſtrels, called them to her, intending to amuſe herſelf for a few minutes by hearing them play and ſing. They returned into the houſe, when the doors were ſhut, and the muſicians began to play ſome of their gayeſt and moſt approved airs for the entertainment of the lady.

She had juſt entered into the ſpirit of this

this diverſion, when, on a ſudden, the huſband's knock was heard at the door. The fidlers gave themſelves up for loſt, and the wife was ſeized with the utmoſt conſternation; indeed all four had equal cauſe for their terrors. The lady in this dilemma happily diſcovers three empty trunks upon a bedſtead; ſhe puts a fidler in each, ſhuts the covers and goes to open the door for her huſband.

He had come only to pry into his wife's concerns, according to cuſtom: ſo, after a ſhort ſtay, he went out again; not, as one may conjecture, to the great diſſatisfaction of the lady. She inſtantly ran to the trunks, in order to free her priſoners; for the night approached, and her huſband could not be long abſent. But, conceive her alarm, when ſhe found them all three ſuffocated! She almoſt wiſhed herſelf in the ſame ſituation However. She prudently conſidered, that all the lamentation in the world would be

too

too late to remedy the evil. The object now was, to get rid of the dead bodies, and there was not a moment to be loſt in attempting it.

She ran to the door, and ſeeing a countryman paſs; "Friend" ſhe cried, "have you an inclination to be rich?"—"To be ſure, I have, lady. Try me, and ſee whether I have any objection."—"Well, all I aſk in return, is a ſervice that you can render me in a moment, and I promiſe you thirty well told livres; but you muſt take a ſolemn oath to be ſecret." The countryman, tempted by the offer of ſo large a ſum, entered into all the obligations ſhe required. The lady of the caſtle then led the countryman into her apartment, and opening one of the trunks, told him all that ſhe required of him to do, was to take the dead body he ſaw there, and to throw it into the river. He aſks her for a ſack, puts the carcaſe into it, and going down pitches it from the

the bridge; then returns, all out of breath, for his payment.

I wiſh nothing more than to ſatisfy you, ſaid the lady; but you will allow, that the bargain we made ſhould be fulfilled on both ſides. You agreed with me to rid me of the dead body; but here it is again; look at it yourſelf. At the ſame time ſhe ſhews him the ſecond trunk, which held another of the hunchbacks. The clown was confounded at the ſight. What, the devil! is he come back again? I thought I had pitched him over completely. It is aſſuredly a ſorcerer! but, by all that's good, I'll go through with it; he ſhall have another leap into the water." He inſtantly ſtuffs the ſecond carcaſe into the ſack, and goes to throw it, as he did the other, into the river; taking care to put his head undermoſt, and to ſee that he fell into the water.

In the mean time, the lady changed the poſition of the trunks; ſo that the third, which was full, ſtood in the ſituation of the firſt. When the countryman entered, ſhe took him by the hand, and conducting him towards the remaining carcaſe, ſaid, "you were certainly right my friend; this muſt have been a forcerer, and there never was his equal. For, do but obſerve, there he is again!" The clown grinds his teeth with rage. "What then, by all the devils in hell, am I to be all day carrying this curſed hunch back? the villain is determined not to die! but we ſhall ſee how that will be." He raiſes the body then, with the moſt dreadful imprecations, and after tying a large ſtone about his neck, throws him into the middle of the ſtream, threatening violently, if he ſhould eſcape a third time to cudgel him to death.

The firſt object that preſented itſelf to him,

him on his return, was the maſter of the houſe, who was coming home. At the ſight the clown was almoſt beſide himſelf. "What! are you there again, and is it impoſſible to get rid of you? come, I ſee that I muſt make away with you at once"—He immediately ruſhes upon the Caſtellan, and knocks out his brains; and in order the more effectually to prevent his return, he throws him into the river tied up in the ſack.

"I'll venture a wager you have not ſeen him again this laſt time," ſaid the clodpole to the lady, when he returned to her chamber.—She anſwered, that ſhe had not.—"Yet you were not far from it, replied he; for the ſorcerer had got as far as the door. But I took care of him. You may make yourſelf eaſy, Madam; I'll anſwer for it, you'll not be troubled with him again."

It was no difficult matter for the lady

to underſtand this declaration. In fact, ſhe knew but too well what he meant by it: but the misfortune was, there was no remedy; and it was neceſſary for her to take comfort. As to what remained to be done, the countryman was paid with exact punctuality the ſum he had been promiſed by the lady; and perhaps neither the one or the other ever knew a happier day.

THE BARONESS OF VERGY.

A GALLANT and comely knight, named *Agolan*, became violently enamoured of the baroneſs of V[illegible]gy, niece to the duke of Burgundy, and paid his court to her with ſo much ardour, that ſhe could not prevent herſelf at length from conceiving a reciprocal paſſion. She yielded to his love, but upon this condition, that he ſhould not ſuffer the moſt minute ſuſpicion of their connexion to tranſpire, on pain of feeling her hatred and reſentment as much as he had before experienced her tenderneſs.

After this mutual compact, the charming and circumſpect baroneſs took the moſt ſcrupulous precautions in the interviews ſhe had with her lover. She occupied in the caſtle an apartment that looked

into the garden. *Agolan*, whenever he was permitted to approach her, went alone at night to the garden; and there behind ſome tree he waited in ſilence the concerted ſignal. This ſignal was a little dog looſened by the lady, as ſoon as ſhe found herſelf at liberty. The animal by his barking and his playful careſſes gave notice to the knight, when he was to ſlip quietly into his miſtreſs's chamber, ſure to find her alone. The next morning, before day-light, he retired. Thus lived this charming couple, their minds entirely engaged in the pleaſure they received in each other's company, and their happineſs the more exquiſite in being known only to themſelves.

Agolan, whoſe valour often drew him to the court of the duke, his ſovereign, had become his confident and friend; but he had, at the ſame time, without being aware of it, recommended himſelf

ſelf ſtill more ſtrongly to the dutcheſs. She had not contemplated with indifference the gracefulneſs of his perſon and the manly beauty of his countenance, and more than once gave him an opportunity, if his affections had not been rivetted in another place, to diſcern it. But this language of the eyes not having been underſtood, ſhe found it neceſſary to adopt another.

She accordingly, on a certain occaſion, took the knight aſide, and expreſſed her ſurprize, that with ſo great reputation and ſo many exterior advantages, he had not yet, among all the beauties of the Burgundian court, made his choice of a miſtreſs. He anſwered, that the dread of having the homage of his heart rejected had till then prevented him from making the offer of it. She blamed his exceſſive modeſty, urged him to have a little more confidence in himſelf, and aſſured him, that accompliſhments like his

his might find many a heart, that required only the ſummons to ſurrender. But ſhe would have him ſoon fix his choice, and make it among perſons of the firſt rank; eſpecially if any of that deſcription deigned to give him an intimation of their good will. Our knight declined meeting theſe advances of the dutcheſs, and cut the matter ſhort by declaring, that he was too conſcious of the weakneſs of his pretenſions to be ridiculouſly ambitious of obtaining the happineſs of monarchs.

Deceived by the circumſpect caution of his diſcourſe, the dutcheſs thought, that *Agolan* to that moment had received no amorous impreſſion; and believed it was only neceſſary to diſſipate the prejudices he had imbibed reſpecting the difference of rank. She then aſked him, what anſwer his modeſty would make, if ſhe were to chuſe him for her knight, and to avow that ſhe had long had

had a ſtrong prepoſſeſſion in his favour. He replied with a mixture of reſpect and ingenuity: madam, I knew not that I had ſo great an honour; and I am thankful to God for his grace in enabling me to obtain your favour, and that of my ſovereign. I hope he will alſo grant me that of continuing to deſerve them, and of never forgetting the faith and loyalty I owe you both."—"And who urges you to betray your ſovereign?" ſhe ſharply rejoined; and then with a furious look, which ſhe accompanied with ſome ſarcaſms, ſhe left him and went towards her apartment, there to conceal her ſhame, and to think upon the means of vengeance.

At night, when the duke had lain down by her ſide, ſhe began to heave ſighs half ſuppreſſed, as if ſhe laboured under ſome inward affliction. The duke, who had a tender affection for his wife, was very uneaſy at it, and enquired

quired the cauſe of her ſorrow. "It is on your account, my good and kind lord, that I grieve. How ſeldom, alas! can perſons of your rank reckon with certainty upon the honour and fidelity of their adherents. Nay, they experience moſt frequently the greateſt perfidy from thoſe on whom they have heaped the greateſt favours." "I cannot comprehend the tendency of your words," ſaid the duke in ſurprize; "I think that I am ſurrounded by none whoſe fidelity I cannot rely on. But if among them I ſhould diſcover a traitor, an exemplary puniſhment ſhould be the return for his guilt."—"Then, my lord, let that puniſhment fall on *Agolan*. You remember all that you have done for that perfidious man; learn that his gratitude conſiſts in his endeavours to diſhonour you; and that yeſterday was I put to the bluſh, almoſt the whole day, by his criminal ſolicitations. The ladies of your court had good reaſon, as well

well as myſelf, to wonder that the hypocrite had never been detected in an amour.—We now are acquainted with the cauſe, and our ſurprize can ſubſiſt no longer."

The duke was ſo deeply affected with this charge of treaſon in a man for whom he had entertained ſo unbounded an eſteem, that the whole night he was denied the enjoyment of repoſe. The next morning he ſent for *Agolan*, and after having bitterly reproached him for his ingratitude and perfidy, he ordered him that very day to quit the dutchy, if he did not wiſh the next to periſh upon a gibbet.

Theſe unexpected menaces, theſe cruel and unmerited reproaches ſo confounded the knight, that for ſome moments he was incapable of making an anſwer. The thought alone of being for ever ſeparated from his beloved *Vergy* froze his faculties

faculties with horror. But when he had recovered from his conſternation, he entreated the duke to call to mind his zeal and fidelity, and not condemn without proof, on the ſuggeſtion perhaps of ſome malignant enemy, a man whoſe bravery had been proved, and whoſe conduct had been irreproachable. "It is not an enemy," ſaid the duke; "it is the dutcheſs herſelf who is your accuſer; dare you call in queſtion her teſtimony?" This atrocious conduct of the dutcheſs filled *Agolan* with horror. He would not, however, accuſe her, in order to juſtify himſelf; but with an air of reſignation he went no further than to ſay: "Sire, ſince her grace has complained of me, ſhe, doubtleſs, conceives that ſhe has good grounds for it; and I had beſt acquieſce: beſides, now that you are prejudiced againſt me, what ſteps could I take to prove my innocence?"

The manner in which he delivered theſe

theſe words made its impreſſion upon the duke. His former attachment and eſteem for the knight already began to operate in his favour; but this ſentiment was checked by a malignant remark the dutcheſs made on his indifference. That obſervation had ſtruck the duke in a very ſingular manner, and he had ſcarcely a doubt upon his mind, but that he, who had never yet been known to admire any of the court beauties, had conceived a paſſion for the dutcheſs. To ſatisfy his ſcruples on this head, he required of *Agolan* to ſwear upon his honour that he would anſwer with truth a queſtion that was about to be propoſed to him. The knight, who perceived but one practicable method to preſerve at once the friendſhip of his ſovereign and the poſſeſſion of his miſtreſs, took the oath without heſitation. "Well," rejoined the duke, "you have never been known, either at court or elſewhere, to have had an attachment; and ſo long

as I am in that uncertainty, I ſhall believe you guilty. Anſwer me without reſerve. Have you any ſecret amour? who is the object of your affections? That is what I want to know, and what alone can cure me of my ſuſpicions. Entruſt me with the ſecret, and admit me into that confidence, which I think is due to my friendſhip: on that condition it is reſtored to you. But if you refuſe, I ſhall conſider you in no other point of view, than that of a perfidious traitor, an object deſerving my moſt indignant anger. Make your choice."

Then was *Agolan* made ſenſible of his imprudence in taking the proferred oath, and the cruel embarraſſment of his ſituation. Could he dare to acknowledge to the duke the love he entertained for his niece? could he tranſgreſs the inviolable ſecrecy that *Vergy* had required of him? if he declines an anſwer, he adds the guilt of perjury to the

the condemnation of baniſhment; if he ſpeaks out, he betrays his miſtreſs; and, in either caſe is ſure to loſe her.

Agitated and torn from one ſide to another by theſe diſtracting thoughts, he could not ſuppreſs his anguiſh. Tears guſh out, in ſpite of all his attempts to reſtrain them, and trickle down his cheeks. The duke, ſoftened at the ſight, endeavours to confirm him, with an oath, which he made, in his turn, on the fealty due to him as ſovereign lord, never to reveal the ſecret he required to any living perſon in the univerſe; and he aſks it again, leſs as the completion of an engagement, than as a teſtimony of confidence and eſteem. The knight could reſiſt no longer; but at length avowed the dreadful myſtery, the ſecret of his life. At firſt the duke with-held his belief of it. His niece lived in ſo profound a retreat, that the confeſſion of an intrigue with her ſeemed

to him nothing more than a ſubtle falſehood. In vain did the knight relate to him the commencement and progreſs of this amour, the particulars of their meeting in the garden, and the ſignal of the little dog: he perſiſted obſtinately to doubt of whatever he was not an eye-witneſs to, and abſolutely required of the happy lover, that he ſhould be conducted to the rendezvous. *Agolan* could no longer refuſe him this demand, after having granted the firſt. He agreed then with the duke on certain precautions; and at night they met at an appointed place, whence they ſet off together for the caſtle.

They were ſcarcely arrived in the garden, before they heard the barking of the little dog, who ran towards *Agolan* and fondled upon him. The duke then, pretending that his doubts were removed, bade adieu to the knight, as if what he had ſeen amounted to a ſufficient

ent proof; but he immediately afterwards returned and followed *Agolan*, with a full reſolution to ſee how this myſterious adventure would terminate. The gate was half open. He ſaw the happy *Agolan* enter. He ſaw his neice, who had riſen on the firſt ſignal, run and throw herſelf with tranſport into the arms of her lover. After a thouſand careſſes, ſhe reproached him for his long abſence, and expreſſed her joy at having again found him. She then conducted him into her apartment, where they paſſed the night together in tranſports, of which lovers only can have a conception.

The approach of day ſummoned *Agolan* to retire. The baroneſs, having fixed the time for their next meeting, led him back to the gate, where overwhelming him with tears and kiſſes, ſhe took a tender farewell. The duke was a witneſs to this ſcene, as he had been to the firſt meeting of the lovers. He had

remained all night in the garden leſs to gain further proof of the knight's innocence, of which he was now fully convinced, than to render him on the ſpot the juſtice that was due to him. The knight was no ſooner out, than he made up to him, embraced him, aſked pardon for the injurious ſuſpicions he had entertained, and aſſured him of his unalterable friendſhip. *Agolan*, ſurpriſed to ſee him there, conjured him by all that was moſt dear to him, never to reveal the ſecret. "I ſhall be ready to expire with grief," ſaid he, "did I imagine that any other perſon in the world beſides yourſelf had a ſuſpicion of my amour." "Say no more to me about it, anſwered the duke; for from this moment I baniſh all recollection of it:" and inſtantly diverting the diſcourſe to another ſubject, he conducted *Agolan* to the palace.

At dinner he ſeated the knight by his ſide,

ſide, ſtudiouſly ſhewed him every kind of civility, and treated him with ſuch marked attention, that the dutcheſs could not endure it. She pretended to be ill, and quitting the table in vexation, went and lay down in her chamber. The duke, who did not immediately ſuſpect the cauſe of her ſudden retreat, ran to her in great alarm, and as he enquired the cauſe of this ſudden and extraordinary indiſpoſition: "Have I not reaſon," ſaid ſhe, "to be diſordered, when you ſhew ſuch indifference towards me, as to invite to our table the man, who has given ſuch deadly offence to us both? when, after the complaints I yeſterday made of him, I obſerved you, no doubt to inſult me, load him with careſſes?" "Madam, anſwered the duke, tell me no more of his injuries. I know where his affections are placed. Speak to me no further on the ſubject; for neither you nor any other perſon living can now deprive him of my friendſhip."

He

He then went out, without waiting a reply.

The dutcheſs remained in conſternation. After having met with a rebuff, ſhe had the further mortification of finding that ſhe had a rival: and to complete her miſery, ſhe was debarred from all knowledge of the perſon, and denied the means of revenge. The fury of her jealouſy nevertheleſs inſpired her with hopes of attaining it; and, reckoning upon the weak fondneſs of her huſband, ſhe reſolved to force from him that very day the pernicious ſecret that cauſed her uneaſineſs. At night then, when the duke came to place himſelf by her ſide, ſhe made a pretence to move from him, as if ſhe were determined to renounce his bed. He held her, and embracing her affectionately, entreated her forbearance. "What a falſe deceiver you are," ſaid ſhe; "you affect here the language of love, and yet you never had a regard for me!

for

for a long time, alas! have I been led away by your proteſtations: the fond belief indeed was pleaſing; but now am I cruelly undeceived!"—"How?" ſaid the duke—"*Agolan* has deceived you by his falſehoods, and you have believed him in preference to me. I do not require to know his tale, ſince you are determined to conceal it from me: but what diſtracts me, is to meet with ſo bad a return for all my tenderneſs. Never has my heart, you well know, indulged a wiſh, but it has been made known to you; never have I poſſeſſed a ſecret, that was not entruſted to you. My chief pleaſure was to go and repoſe it in your breaſt; and, in return, you now announce yours to me, only to inform me that I am not to be a partaker of them!"

At theſe words ſhe burſt into tears, and ſighed and ſobbed ſo piteouſly, and with ſuch imitation of real ſorrow, that the

the duke began to ſoften. "My love, ſaid he, I cannot live under your diſpleaſure; but know that I cannot with honour reveal what you require of me"— "Do not make ſuch an avowal, my lord; but to deceive me uſe at leaſt ſome more plauſible pretext. Your tenderneſs has often entruſted me with ſecrets of much greater importance; and you know whether I ever gave you reaſon to repent of your confidence. No, I muſt again repeat it; you are not apprehenſive of my indiſcretion; but your heart is eſtranged, and you no longer love me."

Her words were then cut ſhort by ſobs, and her face inundated with tears. The duke in vain ſought to conſole her with carreſſes; they only contributed to augment her ſorrows. "No," cried he, "I can no longer withſtand your grief, nor conceal any thing from your love. You ſhall ſee how far the exceſs of mine can tranſport me; but take care never

to

to betray me: for my vengeance would be dreadful, and I give you notice nothing leſs than your life could expiate it. Thoſe are my conditions—Do you feel yourſelf capable of acceding to them?" —"Yes, I ſubmit to them, ungrateful as you are, to think the fear of death can have greater power over me, than the apprehenſion of your diſpleaſure."

Theſe words compleated the buſineſs of ſeducing the weak, credulous duke. Love blinded him; he forgot his promiſe, and imprudently told his faithleſs wife the whole confeſſion that *Agolan* had made. He neither omitted the rendezvous in the garden, of which he had been a witneſs, nor the well contrived manœuvre of the little dog; nor above all the tender affection that his niece ſhewed towards the gallant knight.

Every word he uttered felt like the point of a dagger plunged into the boſom

ſom of the dutcheſs. Yet ſhe retained ſo far the command of her paſſions as to preſerve her diſſimulation, and renewed ſeveral times the oaths of ſecrecy that ſhe had taken: but within ſhe made vows of a very different nature, and was reſolved to die rather than not be revenged on her rival. From that moment ſhe gave up her mind to the contrivance of the barbarous deſign: day and night it haunted her imagination, and every inſtant that retarded it, appeared an age to her.

She found, however, no opportunity to let looſe her vengeance till Whitſuntide. The duke then held a plenary court, to which all the men and women of diſtinction in the dutchy were invited. *Vergy* did not fail to attend. At the ſight of her the dutcheſs grew pale with rage and envy, and her frame was thrown into convulſions. She found means nevertheleſs to diſſemble her emotion,

tion, and endeavoured to beſtow more than ordinary attention on her niece. But when the ladies removed into her apartment, to prepare themſelves for the ball, ſhe exhorted them to gaiety and mirth. "As for you," ſaid ſhe to the baroneſs *de Vergy*, "I commend you to the care of your particular friend." "Madam," anſwered the lady with gentleneſs, "I know not whom you allude to; I have no friends, but what I may publickly avow, and who do credit both to my lord and myſelf."—"I believe it moſt ſincerely, my gay niece; when a woman is ſo dextrous, as to know how to employ little dogs to the beſt advantage, ſhe need avow only what ſhe pleaſes." The ladies paid no attention to a diſcourſe which they did not underſtand; and went into the public room to begin the dances.

As for the baroneſs, who was ready to burſt with ſhame and anguiſh, ſhe ſlipped

into a neighbouring cloſet, where ſhe threw herſelf upon a couch, and gave herſelf up to deſperation, without ſo much as perceiving a female ſervant that was preſent. Her firſt complaints were reproaches to her lover, whom ſhe ſuſpected of having bought the ducheſs's heart, at the price of perfidy to her. After pouring forth the effuſions of her ſoul, in a various tranſition of paſſions, ſhe called upon death to relieve her, and ſtretching out her arms, as if to claſp her lover in a laſt forgiving embrace, ſhe ſunk upon the couch, breathed a ſigh, and expired.

Agolan was in the hall with the ladies, obliged from complaiſance to join in their amuſements; but he did not ſee her to whom his heart was attached, and his reſtleſs eyes ſought her in every quarter. Surpriſed, at laſt, at her long abſence, he enquired after her of the duke, who taking him by the hand, and pointing out

out to him the cloſet, deſired him to go and ſeek her there. He enters it with eagerneſs of a lover, and beholds, Heavens, what a ſight! a pale and breathleſs corſe. He ſeeks in vain to bring her to life again by kiſſes: his warm lips meet lips congealed by death. The ſervant, whom he perceives and interrogates, tells him ingenuouſly all that ſhe had heard and ſeen. Too well informed by this recital, he exclaims: "Oh! thou tendereſt and beſt of women, in recompence for ſo much love and fidelity, have I then betrayed thee! and art thou alone to ſuffer for it! no! I will do thee juſtice—thou ſhalt be revenged."——He then ſeized a ſword, which he ſaw hanging againſt the wall, plunged it into his heart, and fell at the feet of his miſtreſs.

The affrighted girl runs into the hall, to bear the tidings of the two-fold miſchief, that ſhe had witneſſed. The duke,

on entering the cloſet, and beholding the ſad ſpectacle, is fixed to the ground ſome moments with horror. Then, ſeizing at once the ſword, reeking with the blood of his unhappy friend, he returns to the dutcheſs. "I had vowed your death," cried he, "if you betrayed me; die then, you are no longer fit to live." On which he ſtabs her, and lays her dead at his feet. They cry out, and give the alarm on all ſides, the dances are put a ſtop to, and the company approach to view the awful ſight. The duke then related to them, the ſad and deplorable adventure of the two lovers. In the relation of it, his tears flowed abundantly, and all that were preſent wept with him. But when the bodies were produced, the whole company was diſſolved in an agony of grief.

The next day the duke celebrated the funeral of theſe two faithful lovers, with regal honours, and erected a rich mauſoleum, in which he placed them, incloſed

cloſed within the ſame tomb. Having fulfilled this duty, he next thought of the expiation of his crime. With this intention he took the croſs, repaired to the holy land, and entered into the order of the templars. He afterwards led a very exemplary life, but could never forget the misfortunes he had occaſioned by a ſingle indiſcretion. His appearance ever after indicated a rooted ſorrow; nor was a ſmile ever ſeen upon his lips. But he proved himſelf a valiant knight, and in the plains of Paleſtine, ſacrificed many a proud Saracen to the manes of his betrayed friend. *

* From this ſtory a romance has been made, entitled *La compteſſe de Vergy*. To give length to the fable, the author, who was ſaid to be the *Commandeur de Vignacourt*, ingrafted many hiſtorical traits, of the reign of *Philip Auguſtus*; and anecdotes of ſome of the moſt illuſtrious names of the ancient Burgundian families.

THE POOR SCHOLAR.

A YOUNG provincial ſcholar had travelled to Paris, with the deſign of finiſhing his ſtudies in the ſchools; but after ſome ſtay there, having ſold piece by piece, the whole of his little property, he was obliged at laſt by neceſſity to leave the capital, and to travel homeward. He ſet out then, and walked with all his ſpeed, as having no time to ſpare upon the road; he continued his march at the ſame rate, the whole day, without taking any refreſhment: for he was not worth a halfpenny.

When night, however, approached, it was neceſſary for him to think of an aſylum. Happily he diſcovered a ſolitary habitation; thither he bent his way, and being arrived at the door, prayed, in the name of God, that they would admit him. The maſter of the houſe,

houſe, an honeſt and induſtrious man, was gone to the mill; and there was none at that time within, except the wife and a female ſervant. The former anſwered our traveller in a dry way, that ſhe never admitted any perſon in the abſence of her huſband. The poor ſcholar redoubled his intreaties: he urged the unhappy condition he was in, and declared that the only favour he ſhould expect, would be a bundle of ſtraw in the ſtable, and a morſel of bread: but he received a harſher anſwer than before, and was ordered to go about his buſineſs.

As he was going away, he ſaw a valet enter, with a baſket containing two bottles of wine, which the wife took and placed in a corner. The maid ſervant, at the ſame time, put into a cupboard, a cake, which ſhe had juſt made, and a piece of pork which ſhe drew out of the pot. And not long after a prieſt made his appearance, wrapped up in his black mantle,

mantle, who paſſed the ſcholar, without ſaying a word, and ſlipped into the houſe.

All theſe circumſtances increaſed the vexation of the traveller. Full of diſmal thoughts, as one may ſuppoſe, oppreſſed by fatigue, almoſt fainting with hunger, and uncertain what would be his fate, he ſat down a few paces diſtant, on one ſide of the road, to lament his wretched condition. A countryman, paſſing by with a loaded horſe, heard his lamentations, and aſked him the cauſe of them. "You behold," ſaid the ſcholar, "one in the laſt extremity of deſpair, reduced, for want of an aſylum, to paſs the night on this ſpot."—"For want of an aſylum!" anſwered the countryman, "why do you not go and knock at the door of that houſe oppoſite to you?" "Alas! Sir, I did, and was turned away." "Turned away! ſay you? know that the houſe is mine. Follow

Follow me; and we'll ſee whether a lodging cannot be provided for you."

The countryman took the traveller by the hand, and, knocking at the door with the authority of a maſter, called his wife. She not expecting him, was greatly ſurpriſed at his arrival. "Sir," ſaid ſhe to the prieſt, "hide yourſelf under this table; I will make him go to bed early, and then you may have an opportunity to eſcape." Whilſt the prieſt was withdrawing himſelf, ſhe went to open the door. The countryman defired the ſcholar to enter. "Friend," ſaid he, "lay down your hat, and take a ſeat. I defire you will make yourſelf at home. I am a man that loves eaſe, and hates ceremony: ſo, houſewife, what have we in the houſe to ſet before our gueſt?" "Nothing, huſband. You know that when you went to the mill, I did not expect that you would return to night, I therefore provided nothing."—That's

true

true: they ſent me back ſooner than I looked for; there being nothing for them to do; and I am glad of it, ſince it has been the cauſe of my falling in with this good man. But, by St. Clement, nothing is rather too little."—"There was a piece of bread left; but *Catherine* and I diſpatched it."—"It is not on my own account," replied the huſband, "that I ſpeak; but for the ſake of this poor traveller, whoſe walk muſt have given him a keen appetite."—"Well, ſince you have brought ſome flour, *Catherine* has nothing to do but to make you up ſomething. A ſcanty meal is ſoon digeſted."

The huſband ſwore bitterly at this bad luck; but there was no remedy. As for the ſcholar, who knew perfectly what the wife was about, and who had been a witneſs to the preparations for a good ſupper, he was ſecretly enraged, and

and would gladly have ſeized an opportunity of being revenged.

Whilſt *Catherine* was about her work, the countryman requeſted the traveller, either to ſing, or tell them a ſtory. "For my own part," ſaid he, "I am an ignorant man; but I like men of ſenſe, and thoſe who know how to read and write. Come, friend, let us have ſomething that will entertain us."—"I know neither ſong nor fable," anſwered the ſcholar, "and I am not one to lead you aſtray with falſehoods, or to tell idle ſtories without truth or reaſon. But I will relate to you, if you pleaſe, an adventure that happened to me this morning, and that put me into a dreadful fright."—"Very well, Sir; let us have the account of your fright, and I ſhall be ſatisfied." The ſcholar then began as follows:

"I had juſt croſſed a wood, about three

three o'clock in the morning, when I perceived in the common a large drove of hogs. There were ſome of all kinds and ſizes, great, ſmall, white, black; in a word, of all manner of ſhapes and colours; but I particularly admired the leader. It was fat, ſmooth, and plump, in ſhort, juſt ſuch another as that muſt have been, of which *Catherine* not long ago, took a piece out of the pot." "What! wife," interrupted the huſband, "you have pork in the houſe, and did not tell us of it!" The wife reddened, and as ſhe could get nothing by concealing the fact, acknowledged it. "Friend," ſaid the countryman, "ſo far as I can ſee, we are not likely to die with hunger; it was lucky that you happened to fall in with the hogs. But, come, finiſh your ſtory." "Then, Sir, I was ſaying that there was in the drove a remarkably fine hog. Now, this hog wandered a ſmall diſtance from the reſt. A wolf was laying wait for him; he watched his op-

opportunity, leaped upon him, and carried him off with as much expedition, as the valet went hence ſome little time ago, after he had delivered his wine." "How! by St. Paul, have we got wine too!" cried the huſbandman, "we are lucky rogues. My friend, that will waſh down the pork.—But, tell me, were there no dogs to purſue the wolf?"—"No; the ſwineherd, I imagine, had not come out of the wood; at leaſt I did not ſee him. For my own part, I was extremely anxious to ſtop the plunderer; but how was I to compaſs it? By good luck, I perceived at my feet a large ſtone. It was of a prodigious ſize to throw, by my faith, not leſs than the cake *Catherine* made to night."—At theſe words the wife was in the utmoſt confuſion. "Yes, Sir," ſaid ſhe, ſtammering; "I deſired her to prepare a cake—I wiſhed to ſurprize you—it is made with eggs—you ſee that I did not forget you."—"God be thanked, wife; ſurely I have no rea-

ſon to be diſpleaſed at that. But, between ourſelves, good luck to our gueſt and his fears ſince they produce ſuch good fare. So then, Sir, you threw the ſtone at the wolf"—"I threw it at him, as you ſay, and ſtruck him with it. But this is the worſt part of the ſtory, and what gave me, moſt alarm; the animal let go the hog, and rnſhes towards me, grinding his teeth, and looking furiouſly at me; juſt as the prieſt does this moment, who is under that table"—"A prieſt in my houſe," cried the countryman! "Ah! ſtrumpet! you bring gallants to the houſe when I am away; and it was for him you prepared that fine ſupper!" On this, he took up a ſtick, and began to dreſs his wife handſomely. The prieſt, who foreſaw that his turn would come next, endeavoured to make his eſcape; but he was ſtopped and ſoundly beaten; after which he was ſtripped and in that condition turned out of doors. As for the poor ſcholar, he feaſted upon the ſupper intended

tended for the prieſt; he drank his wine; and, on his departure in the morning was accoutred in the clerical ſpoils.

There is a vulgar proverb, that ſays, refuſe relief to nobody, not even to one whom you may never expect to ſee again. This is a very judicious maxim; for many perſons, who may appear contemptible and beneath notice, are often capable of cauſing you a great deal of uneaſineſs. And this, in fact, was exemplified in our ſtory. Had the woman granted an aſylum to the ſcholar when he requeſted it, he would have revealed nothing; the aſſignation would have been unknown to her huſband, and ſhe would have eſcaped a ſevere beating.

THE THREE THIEVES OR HAMET AND BERARD.

THREE rogues, in the vicinage of Lân, uniting the ingenuity of their talents, had for a conſiderable time put both monks and laymen under contribution. Two of them were brothers; their names *Hamet* and *Berard*. Their father, who had followed the ſame profeſſion, had juſt finiſhed his career at the gallows. The name of the third was *Travers*. They never robbed or murdered; but only purſued the buſineſs of pilfering and kidnapping, in which they had arrived to an aſtoniſhing degree of ingenuity.

As they were walking together one day in the wood of Lân, and talking of their ſeveral feats of dexterity, *Hamet*, the eldeſt of the two brothers, eſpied at the top of a lofty oak a magpie's neſt, and ſaw

the mother fly into it. "Brother," ſaid he to *Berard*, "what would you ſay to a perſon that ſhould propoſe, to go and take the eggs from under that bird without alarming it?". "I ſhould tell him," anſwered the younger brother, "that he was a fool, and propoſed a thing impoſſible to be done."—"Well, learn my friend, that he who cannot accompliſh ſo practicable a theft, is but a booby in his profeſſion. Obſerve me"—This ſaid, he immediately climbs the tree. Having reached the neſt he makes a hole in it underneath, receives ſoftly in his hand the eggs, as they ſlip through the opening, and brings them down, deſiring his companions to obſerve that not a ſingle egg was broken. "By my ſoul," cries *Berard*, "I muſt allow you to be an incomparable thief; but if you could go and replace the eggs under the mother, as quietly as you have taken them from her, we ſhould acknowledge you our maſter."

Hamet accepts the challenge, and again mounts the tree: but his brother designed a trick upon him. The latter, as ſoon as he ſees the other at a certain height, ſays to *Travers*: "You have juſt been a witneſs to *Hamet's* dexterity; you ſhall now ſee what I can do in the ſame way." He inſtantly climbs the tree, and follows his elder brother from branch to branch; and whilſt the latter has his eyes fixed upon the neſt, entirely taken up with his deſign, and watching every motion of the bird, the ſlippery rogue looſens his trowſers, and brings them down as a ſignal of triumph. *Hamet*, in the mean time, contrives to replace all the eggs, and coming down looks for the praiſe due to ſo clever an exploit. "Oh, you only want to deceive us," ſaid *Berard* bantering him; "I'll wager that you have concealed the eggs in your trowſers." The other looks, ſees that his trowſers are gone, and ſoon finds out the trick of his brother's.

"Excellent

"Excellent rogue," said he, "to outwit another!"

As for *Travers*, he was lost in equal admiration of these two heroes, and could not determine which had the advantage. But he felt himself humbled at their superiority; and piqued at not being able to contend with them, cried, "Friends you are too knowing for me. You would escape twenty times, when I should be the scape-goat. I perceive that I am too aukward to thrive in this business; so I shall go and follow my own trade. I renounce thieving forever. I have good strong arms, and will return home and live with my wife: with the help of God I shall be able to procure a subsistence." He fulfilled his declaration and returned to his village. His wife loved him; he became an honest man, and set himself to work with so much industry, that at the close of a few months,

months, he had earned wherewithal to buy a hog. The animal was fattened at home. At Chriſtmas he killed it, and having hung it in the uſual way, againſt the wall, he went into the fields. But it had been much better for him to have ſold it. He would then have ſaved himſelf a vaſt deal of uneaſineſs.

The two brothers, who had not ſeen him ſince their ſeparation, came at this very time to pay him a viſit. The wife was alone ſpinning. She told them that her huſband was juſt gone out, and that he would not return till night. With eyes accuſtomed to examine every thing, you might have ſworn the hog could not eſcape their notice. "Oh, ho," ſaid they, on going out, "this fellow is going to regale, and did not think us worth inviting! Well, we muſt carry off his pork, and eat it without him." The rogues then laid their plot, and till night

ſhould

ſhould enable them to act, they went and concealed themſelves behind a neighbouring hedge.

At night, when *Travers* returned, his wife told him of the viſit ſhe had received. "I was much alarmed," ſaid ſhe, "at being alone with them; they had ſo ſuſpicious an appearance, that I did not venture to aſk either their name or buſineſs. But they ſearched every corner with their eyes; I don't think a ſingle peg eſcaped their notice." "Ah, it muſt have been my two queer companions," cried *Travers* in great trouble; "my hog is loſt; and I now heartily wiſh that I had ſold him."—"We have ſtill a reſource," ſaid the wife. "Let us take down the pork, and hide it ſomewhere for the night. To morrow morning, you may conſider what is to be done." *Travers* adopted his wife's advice. He took down the pork, and laid it under the bread-oven, at the oppoſite end of the room;

room; after which he lay down, but not with his mind perfectly at eaſe.

Night being come, the two brothers arrived to accompliſh their project; and while the eldeſt kept watch, *Berard* began to penetrate the wall in that part where he had ſeen the pork hanging. But he quickly perceived that nothing was left except the ſtring by which it was ſuſpended. "The bird is flown," ſaid he; "we are come too late."—*Travers*, whom the dread of being robbed kept awake, thinking he heard a noiſe, waked his wife, and ran to the oven to feel if the pork was ſtill ſafe. He found it there; but as he was alſo apprehenſive for his barn and ſtable, he determined to make the circuit of them, and went out armed with a hatchet. *Berard*, who heard him go out, took the advantage of that opportunity to pick open the door; and approaching the bed and counterfeiting the voice of the huſband,

"Mary,

"Mary," ſaid he, "the pork is removed from the wall; what have you done with it?"—"Don't you remember, then, that we put it under the oven," anſwered the wife? "what, has fear turned your brain?" "No, no," replied the other, "I had only forgot—But ſtop, I will ſecure it." In ſaying which, he lifts the pork upon his ſhoulders and runs off.

After having gone his rounds and viſited carefully his doors, *Travers* returned to the chamber. "I have got a huſband," ſaid the woman, "who, it muſt be confeſſed, has a curious head upon his ſhoulders; to forget one moment what he had done with his pork another." At theſe words *Travers* ſet up a cry, "I told you they would ſteal it from me; it is gone and I ſhall never ſee it more!" Yet as the thieves could not be gone far, he had ſtill ſome hopes of recovering it, and inſtantly ran after them.

They

They had taken to a bye path acroſs the fields, that led towards the wood, where they intended to hide their booty. *Hamet* went before, to ſecure the way, and the brother, whoſe load was a conſiderable impediment, followed him at a ſmall diſtance. *Travers* ſoon came up with the latter. He ſaw him plainly and recognized him. "You muſt be ſomewhat tired," ſaid he aſſuming the voice of the elder brother; "give me the load, and let me take my turn." *Berard*, who thought his brother *Hamet* was ſpeaking to him, gives *Travers* the pork, and walks on. But he had not proceeded an hundred yards, ere, to his great aſtoniſhment, he falls in with *Hamet*. "Zounds," cried he, "I have been enſnared. That rogue *Travers* has taken me in; but ſee if I cannot make amends for my folly."

He then ſtrips himſelf, puts his ſhirt over his cloaths, makes himſelf a kind of

of woman's cap, and in that trim runs as faſt as he can by another path to the houſe of *Travers*, whoſe arrival he waits at the door. As he ſees him approaching, he comes, appearing as the wife, to meet *Travers*, and aſks, with a feigned voice, whether he had recovered the pork. "Yes, I have it," anſwered the huſband—"Well, give it me, and run quickly to the ſtable; for I heard a noiſe there, and I fear they have broke in." *Travers* throws the carcaſe upon the other's ſhoulders, and goes once more to make his round. But when he returns into the houſe, he is ſurpriſed to find his wife in bed, crying and half dead with fear. He then perceives that he has been again cheated. Nevertheleſs, he was determined not to give out; and, as if his honour were concerned in this adventure, he vowed not to give up the conteſt, till by ſome means or other he came off victorious.

He ſuſpected that the thieves this trip would hardly take the ſame road ; but he knew the foreſt was the place they would make for, and accordingly went the ſhorteſt way to it. They had in fact already got there, and in their triumph and eagerneſs to taſte the fruit of their dexterity, they had juſt lighted a fire at the foot of an oak, to broil a piece of the meat. The wood was green and burned but indifferently ; ſo that, to make it blaze, they were obliged to go and gather ſome dried leaves and rotten branches.

Travers, whom the light ſoon directed to the thieves, takes the advantage of their diſtance from the fire. He ſtrips himſelf entirely naked, climbs the oak, ſuſpends himſelf by one arm in the poſition of one who had been hanged; and when he ſees the rogues returned and buſy in blowing up the fire, he roars

roars out with a voice like thunder: "Unhappy wretches! you will come to the ſame end with me!" The two brothers in confuſion imagine they ſee and hear their father, and think of nothing but their eſcape. The other, quickly ſnatches his clothes and his pork; returns in triumph to his wife, and gives her an account of his recent victory. She congratulates him with a kiſs on ſo bold and well executed a manœuvre. "Let us not yet flatter ourſelves with too much ſecurity," ſaid he. "Theſe queer fellows are not far off, and ſo long as the pork ſubſiſts, I ſhall not think it out of danger. But boil ſome water: we'll dreſs it; and, if they return, we ſhall ſee what method they will deviſe to get hold of it again." The one then made a fire, while the other divided the carcaſe, and put it piece by piece into the kettle: they both then ſeated themſelves to watch it, one on each ſide of the fire-place.

But *Travers*, who was almoſt exhauſted for want of reſt, and fatigued by the operations of the night, ſoon began to ſhew a propenſity to ſleep. "Go and lay yourſelf down," ſaid the wife; "I will take care of the pot; all is faſtened; there is nothing to fear: and at all events, if I ſhould hear a noiſe, I'll give you notice." On this aſſurance, he threw himſelf in his clothes upon the bed, and immediately fell faſt aſleep. The wife continued for ſome ſpace of time to watch the caldron; but drowſineſs began to overpower her likewiſe; and at laſt ſhe fell aſleep in her chair.

In the mean time our thieves, after recovering from their alarm, had returned to the oak, but finding there neither pork, nor man in chains, they eaſily unravelled the plot. They conceived themſelves diſhonoured, if in this conflict of ſtratagems *Travers* ſhould finally have the advantage; ſo they returned

turned to his houſe reſolved for this laſt time to ſtrain their ingenuity to the utmoſt.

Before they undertook any thing, *Berard* looked through the hole he had made in the wall, to ſee if the enemy were upon their guard. He ſaw on the one hand *Travers* ſtretched out upon his bed, and on the other the wife, whoſe head nodded from one ſide to another, with a ladle in her hand, while the pork was boiling in the caldron. "They had a mind to ſave us the trouble of cooking it," ſaid *Berard* to his brother; "and indeed it was the leaſt they could do, conſidering what work they have given us already. Be ſteady, and reſt aſſured that I will help you to ſome of it." He then goes and cuts down a long pole, which he ſharpens at one end. With this pole he climbs upon the roof, and letting it down through the

chimney he ſticks it into a piece of pork, and raiſes it up.

Travers at that inſtant happened to awake. He ſaw the manœuvre, and judged that with ſuch expert enemies peace was preferable to war. "Friends," cried he, "you have not done right in breaking through the roof of my houſe; and I have alſo been to blame in not inviting you to partake of my pork. Let us contend no longer for the ſuperiority in artifice; for it is a conteſt that would never have an end: but come down and let us feaſt together."

He went and opened the door to them. They ſat down together at table, and were heartily reconciled to each other.

THE WIFE THAT TRIED HER HUSBAND.

IN a certain town in France there lived a very old baron, who had the character of a prudent and ſagacious man. Being a batchelor and poſſeſſed of a conſiderable eſtate, his friends preſſed him to marry.

Seldom does an old man came to that paſs without getting into trouble. "Get me a woman," ſaid he, "to my liking, and I'll engage to make her my wife." His friends introduced to him a young girl, fair, well proportioned and engaging. The inſtant he ſaw her, he became amourous, and offered her his hand. I mentioned before that he was not in the prime of his youth and vigour; and in ſhort was not exactly what a young woman would fancy. The

bride,

bride, however, put up with her lot patiently for at leaſt a twelvemonth, though ſhe was ſometimes near crying out.

At length, at the expiration of that period, ſhe ſaid to her mother, on meeting her as they came from church, "you know what ſort of a huſband you have given me; I muſt give you notice that I am now tired of him, and have reſolved to take a gallant." The mother uſed many ſound arguments to diſſuade her from ſo dangerous a deſign, but finding her remonſtrances have no effect, "daughter," ſaid ſhe, "obſerve at leaſt the advice which I am going to give you. You are about to make yourſelf very miſerable, unleſs you can aſſure yourſelf of the greateſt meekneſs and forbearance on the part of your huſband. Before you venture to provoke him, try whether he is likely to put up with it; ſound his diſpoſition, and put his patience to the proof by ſome experiment;

in

in a word, ſee how far humour or paſſion may have the power to tranſport him." —" I ſhall take the hint," anſwered the daughter. " In his garden there is a tree, which he planted with his own hand. He takes a delight in ſitting under the ſhade of it, and ſometimes has me there with him, to chat or to play at draughts. I'll cut it down, and ſee what he will ſay to it."—" Do ſo, but take care before hand, that you have not cauſe to repent what you are about."

When the young wife returned home, her huſband was not come back from hunting. She called a ſervant, and ordered him to take a hatchet, and follow her to the garden. When they came to the tree, " cut this down," ſaid ſhe— " What, madam! my maſter's tree? excuſe me, if you pleaſe, from felling that."—" Obey me, I ſay, I will have it cut down."—On the the repeated refuſal of the ſervant, ſhe ſnatched the axe, and

and began chopping the tree on every ſide till ſhe brought it to the ground. She then carried it away.

At this inſtant the baron entered the houſe, and ſeeing his wife bend under the load, aſked what ſhe was carrying. "On my return from church, my lord," ſaid ſhe, "I was told you were out a hunting. Fearful leſt you might come in wet or cold, I was determined to have a good fire for your reception, and having no wood ready cut, I went myſelf to bring ſome from the garden."—"So, madam! you have cut down my favourite tree, that which you knew I was ſo ſtrongly attached to?"—"It did not occur to me, my lord; I thought of nothing but your health."—"Such forgetfulneſs, madam, is rather extraordinary; but for the ſake of peace and quiet in the houſe, I ſhall ſay nothing more, but accept your apology." Nothing further paſſed upon the ſubject.

The

The next day the wife went to ſeek her mother to acquaint her with what ſhe had done to try huſband's temper. "Well, daughter, what did he ſay to you?"—"Nothing: at firſt his eyes ſeemed to portend a ſtorm; but he became all at once calm and mild as a lamb, and concluded with approving my conduct. So, now that I am certain of his eaſineſs of temper, and that I have nothing to fear, I may, you ſee, with ſafety take a gallant."—"Daughter, once more let me adviſe you, not to be too ſure. I know not how or wherefore, but my mind forbodes that you will repent your folly. The baron has not the mien of ſo meek a creature as you repreſent him; and, if you take my advice, you will try him once more."—"To pleaſe you, mother, I will make another experiment: and it ſhall be this: He has a little greyhound, which is as precious to him as one of his eyes. He feeds it every day himſelf, and ſuf-

fers

fers it to lie on his bed at night. In ſhort, he has ſo violent a regard for it, that I am perſuaded were any of the ſervants to hurt it even through heedleſſneſs, they would be that inſtant diſcharged. I'll kill it in his preſence, and we'll ſee what will be the conſequence." "Be it ſo; and may you receive no miſchief from it."

The wife, on her return, found that the baron was, as before, in the field. She made a large fire, then covered the bed with a fine counterpane, and took care that all the chairs had gowns and robes ſpread out upon them. When the old man came in, ſhe went to meet him at the door, took off his cloak and ſpurs with her own hands, threw over his ſhoulders a ſcarlet mantle lined with fur, and placed him a ſeat near the fire. The dog, after coming to careſs his maſter, leaped as uſual upon a chair, and conſequently got upon one of the lady's robes.

She

She perceiving a labourer juſt come in from his work, ſnatched the knife from his girdle * and ſtruck the animal ſo violently with it, that the blood ſpurted upon her petticoat. The huſband ariſes in a rage. "How, madam! dare you kill my greyhound, and before my face too?"—"Sir, I cannot make light as you do of all the miſchief that this dirty animal cauſes every day in the houſe. There is a gown that I have put on but once; ſee what a condition it is now in: indeed this is not to be borne."—"Madam, this is the ſecond time that you have induſtriouſly offended me. I beg it may be the laſt: you will do well to obſerve what I ſay, for I ſhall not caution you a third time."—"I am conſcious, Sir, of having deprived

* It was cuſtomary not only for the lower order of the people, but alſo for the gentry when abroad to carry at their waiſt a ſmall weapon, ſince termed a *conteau de chaſſe*.

you of what you took delight in, and am ſorry for it: ſince I have been ſo unfortunate as to incur your diſpleaſure, I aſk pardon and ſubmit to your reſentment." At the ſame time, to ſee what effect her tears would have on the feelings of the old man, the cunning baggage began to ſob and weep. He was affected at this ſemblance of ſorrow, embraced his wife, pronounced her pardon, and ſaid no more on the ſubject for the remainder of the evening.

The following day our dame had a new victory to boaſt, and conſequently a freſh viſit to make to her mother. "Madam," ſaid ſhe, "I am reſolved, and from this day will enjoy my gallant." —"You are determined then not to give up your deſign?"—"Certainly not."—"But it is ſo eaſy to be prudent. I am more than double your age, and your father had never, as you well know, the leaſt cauſe to complain of me

on

on that head."—"Oh! there is a wide difference between our caſes. My father was a young man when he married you, and you in your turn had no reaſon to complain of him; but, for my part, you know what kind of a huſband I have. In ſhort I muſt have ſome one to make me amends."—"Have you fixed upon the particular perſon?"—"Aſſuredly. For ſome time our chaplain has made love to me. It is he whom I ſhall accept as a lover."—"What! a prieſt, daughter?"—"Yes, madam, I will not have a knight, to come and carry off my jewels; then pawn them, and, publiſhing my weakneſs, make me a public jeſt."—"My dear girl, in the name of God, avoid reproach; take care that you do not ruſh upon your ruin, but follow the advice and example of your mother: yet if you will not be brought back to reaſon, let me prevail upon you at leaſt to

make a third trial. The menace of your husband has given me, I must confess, great alarm, and I cannot drive some unlucky presages from my mind. You are not aware, daughter, how terrible an old fellow is in his resentment."—" Well, mother, next Thursday being Christmas-day, my husband is then to hold a plenary court. At his own table, and in the very face of all his guests, will I again try his patience, since you require it. But, remember, after this experiment, not to insist upon another; for it shall positively be the last."—" Pray to God, that you may not, my good daughter, have reason to repent it."

Christmas being come, all the Baron's vassals together with a great number of ladies were invited to the festival. At dinner, whilst they were upon the first course, as the squire had just carved the meat, the wife, who was eating out of the same dish with the seneschal, entangles

tangles the keys hanging at her waiſt with the fringe of the table-cloth. She afterwards gets up, as it were to go out of the room, when ſhe drags with her table-cloth, plates and diſhes, and brings all to the ground together with a terrible craſh. The company cry out, and the enraged huſband darts a glance of lightening at her. "Alas, my lord, I am vaſtly concerned at the accident; but, ſee, it was not owing to any aukwardneſs of mine." In ſaying which ſhe labours to diſengage the keys from the table-cloth, and with all the ſymptoms of violent anger tears the fringe entirely off. The baron had ſtill reſolution enough to contain himſelf. He not did ſhew the leaſt ill humour, or betray any marks of vexation, but did no more than give directions for another courſe to be ſerved up. In a minute all was ſet right. The company again took their ſeats, and the entertainment ſeemed as if it had been

rather enlivened than croſſed by the accident.

During ſupper at night the old gentleman aſſumed the ſame air of ſatisfaction; but the next morning, before his wife was up, he entered her chamber with a ſurgeon. "Madam," ſaid he, "addreſſing himſelf to her, you had before played two tricks upon me, and I was ſilly enough to excuſe them; and this no doubt encouraged you to have recourſe to the ſame practice. You yeſterday indulged in your third frolick; but I ſhall take care that it be the laſt. I know the cauſe of your petulance. You have ſome vicious blood in your veins; we muſt ſee and have it drawn off. So, ariſe." He then orders the ſurgeon to do the buſineſs. She getting up aſks what that ill looking man wants with her; and when informed what he was ſent for, ſhe declares in a peremptory tone that ſhe is not indiſpoſed and will not

ſuffer herſelf to be blooded. But the huſband, ſtill more peremptory, draws his ſword and obliges her to ſummit. They then bandage both her arms, pierce a vein in each, and let the blood run till ſhe faints; after which they put her again to bed.

Her ſenſes no ſooner return, than ſhe ſends for her mother to come to her with all haſte. The good woman arrives, and finds her daughter pale as death, and ſo feeble that ſhe had ſcarcely power to ſpeak. "Well! daughter, are you ſtill diſpoſed to have a gallant?"—"Ah, never, mother, never!"—"I warned you of the conſequence, and wiſh you had ſpared yourſelf this this leſſon. I congratulate you, however, on you having gone no farther than the proof: for if you had played a trick with the chaplain, your bleeding might have been more dangerous."

THE

THE REFORMED DAME.

YOU that have wives, and ſuffer them to get the upper hand and domineer, liſten to the ſtory which I am going to tell you. It will teach you to curb their caprice betimes, and to correct them when they forget the ſubmiſſion and reſpect they owe you. Hear me, above all, you who diſhonour your ſex in ſuffering yourſelves to be treated by them like ſlaves.

In former days there lived in his caſtle, with his wife and a daughter the fruit of his marriage, a rich lord, who was reputed a brave knight and an honeſt man, with a thouſand good qualities. But, unhappily, when he firſt eſpouſed his wife, his paſſion was ſo violent, that he behaved to her with ſuch deference and ſubmiſſion, as at length

length, by force of cuſtom to have ſo far ſubjected himſelf to her imperious diſpoſition, that he could neither ſpeak without being liable to a contradiction, nor do any thing without being thwarted.

His daughter was a prodigious beauty. She was talked of in all the neighbouring country, and was ſo much the ſubject of public converſation, that a young count of the ſame diſtrict, of great power and illuſtrious birth, but ſtill more eſtimable for his talents and ſenſe than his riches, had his curioſity raiſed to ſuch a degree by the praiſes he heard of her perſon, as to be deſirous of ſeeing the young lady, to ſatisfy himſelf whether ſhe merited the character which the world gave her.

Chance procured him an opportunity of ſeeing her; and it happened in the following manner.

He

He had gone out a hunting with a large retinue. The evening approached; when on a ſudden the ſky was overcaſt, the thunder began to rumble, and ſo violent a ſtorm threatened them, that the greateſt part of the count's people diſperſed; and he himſelf, deſpairing of being able to regain his palace before night, thought of nothing but, with the few attendants he had left, to get a ſhelter till the morning. A hollow way fortunately led him to a park, within which he diſcovered a well built manſion, and rode towards it at full ſpeed.

The lord was ſtanding upon his gallery. As he ſaw the gentleman approach, he advanced politely and ſaluted him. This was the father of the beauty we were juſt ſpeaking of. The count having aſked the favour of being allowed to take ſhelter in the houſe, "Ah, Sir," ſaid he with an humiliated air, "I ſhould be

be happy at all times and particularly now, to invite into my houſe a gentleman of your appearance; but I dare not take it upon me." "You dare not! and pray, Sir, what prevents you?"— "I am not the maſter here, ſince I muſt inform you; my wife has the entire command of every thing, and my aſking you in would be enough to make her turn you out of doors."—"How, Sir, not maſter in your own houſe," replied the count, "and yet you ſeem to wear a beard upon your chin!" "It is now too late to attempt it; I ſuffered my wife at firſt to domineer over me; it is become habitual for me to obey, and ſo it muſt continue for the remainder of my life. But I may ſtill have the pleaſure of your company, if you chuſe to condeſcend, and I beg you will, to ſecond an innocent artifice. I ſhall go within to my wife, whilſt you follow me, and beg an aſylum, which I ſhall refuſe: that

will be ſufficient to ſtimulate her to give you the reception you deſerve."

The count could not help laughing at this curious propoſal. He followed, however, the lord's direction, and matters turned out juſt as was expected. The huſband had no ſooner ſignified his refuſal, than the dame interpoſed, and ordering him in a contemptuous tone to be ſilent, deſired the count with his company to walk in. The huſband, who wiſhed that his viſitors ſhould be handſomely treated, had no other means of contriving it, but by perſiſting in his ſtratagem; ſo he begged his wife with an air of diſcontent, that ſhe would not go and laviſh upon a ſtranger his beſt wine, his poultry, nor the fiſh from his pond or the game of his park. And above all," ſaid he, "let not our daughter appear. Handſome as ſhe is, it would not be prudent to expoſe her to ſo many young men; let her ſtay in her chamber

chamber and ſup with the maids." "Hold your tongue," anſwered the wife; "you are an ideot. This young gentleman ſhall have my daughter's company to ſupper, and he ſhall be ſerved with the beſt our houſe affords. It is my pleaſure, and that's enough."—She in conſequence gave orders to the ſervants to catch fiſh and game; and to her daughter to dreſs herſelf and come down quickly.

Soon after the young lady appeared, with a ſplendour of beauty that dazzled the count. He took her by the hand and ſeated her by his ſide. At table he placed himſelf next to her, and though the repaſt was excellent and his appetite keen, he was more engaged in looking at her than in eating. At laſt love had kindled ſuch a flame in his breaſt, that he was reſolved to have her, if poſſible, for his wife; and after ſupper aſked her hand of the parents.

The father, charmed with the offer, made haſte to enſure the conſent of his wife, by taking it upon him to anſwer with a poſitive refuſal. He ſaid that his daughter, though her family and fortune were not contemptible, yet was no match for his diſtinguiſhed rank. "Sir," replied the wife, "pay no regard to what that ſimpleton ſays, who never opens his mouth but to expoſe his folly. I give you my daughter, and you may celebrate the nuptials whenever you pleaſe." At the ſame time ſhe promiſed for her portion, a quantity of gold and ſilver, with rich ſtuffs, jewels, and ſome valuable ware that ſhe had in her coffers. The count thanked her, declared he ſhould be too much enriched by her beauty, and declined accepting any thing with the lady. "Whoever gets a deſerving wife," ſaid he, "is rich; and the rich man is worſe than poor that weds a bad one." He only requeſted that the ceremony might take

take place the next morning; and he passed the night revolving in his mind sometimes his adventure and his recently contracted engagement, at others reflecting on the mischievous humour of the dame, and the mode of conduct he must adopt, if the temper of his wife should correspond, as it probably would, with that of the mother.

Next day he married the young lady, and intending to carry her thence, he went to give the preparatory orders for his departure. The father took the advantage of this short absence to congratulate his girl on her good fortune. He earnestly exhorted her to render herself worthy of it, by the most unbounded complaisance towards her husband. But the mother, taking her aside, says, "I have but one hint to give you. You have a husband who is fond of you; that is a treasure for a wife. If you have a mind to be happy, get the com-

mand over him at the firſt outſet, and you have him afterwards for life. Find occaſion to contradict him, accuſtom him to obey you, aſſume the tone of authority: in a word, you have obſerved my conduct; ſo follow my example." The girl promiſed that ſhe would, and indeed it had been for ſome time her intention; but the huſband had deſigns, on his part, that would be likely to counteract it.

On his return, they brought on again the ſubject of the marriage portion: and, on his repeated refuſal of it, they begged him at leaſt to accept the trifling preſent of a fine hunter and two greyhounds, which were brought before him. He took them as a friendly gift, and ſet off with his bride and his attendants, mounted on the horſe which had been juſt given to him, and followed by the two dogs, led and tied together.

At the diſtance of about a league from the

the houſe, a hare ſtarted before them. He immediately directed the dogs to be looſened, and ſent in the purſuit of the hare. The greyhounds ſpring out, but ſoon after he perceives them return without their prey. On this he vaults from his ſaddle, and without uttering a word cuts off both their heads. Mean while his horſe, finding himſelf at liberty, runs off. The count calls out to the beaſt to ſtop, but ineffectually; he ſtill continues his courſe. They run after him at length and bring him back, when the count, without ſaying a word more than before, cuts off the horſe's head, as he had thoſe of the dogs, and mounts another.

Whether or not the lady took offence at this procedure, it is eaſy to conjecture. She did not indeed ſuppreſs her indignation; but in a very ſharp tone obſerved to the count, that if he

did not find himſelf diſpoſed to ſpare theſe animals on her account, he ſhould at leaſt have had a greater reſpect for the perſons whoſe gift they had been. To this repreſentation he only anſwered coldly, "Madam, when I give orders, I will have them obeyed," and then went on as if nothing had happened.

At his caſtle there had been a great alarm on account of his abſence. His barons and vaſſals had aſſembled to enquire after him and to wait his arrival; and they already began to be extremely uneaſy. As ſoon as they perceived him coming, they all went out to meet him at the drawbridge, and aſked him who that beautiful damſel was that he brought along with him. "It is my wife," ſaid he, "whom I have juſt eſpouſed; and I beg you will be all preſent at the celebration, which we are going to have of the nuptials."

They

They congratulated him on ſo happy a choice, and reſpectfully ſaluted the lady.

On coming into the houſe, the count ſent for his chief cook, whom he ordered to prepare a ſplendid dinner, of which they ſettled the particulars together. But the counteſs, who was reſolved to try her power, now that ſhe ſaw an opportunity, called the cook, as he was going out, and aſking him what orders he had received, gave him quite contrary directions. "Madam," ſaid the ſervant, "I dare not diſpleaſe my maſter by counteracting his orders; he will not be treated in that manner." "Learn," replied ſhe, "that if you wiſh to remain in this houſe, you muſt obey me in every thing, and look to no other perſon but to me for directions." —"Madam, I ſubmit, ſince you inſiſt on its being ſo; but I hope you will be

be too good to get me into trouble with my master."

When the dinner was ſerved up, the count ſaw with aſtoniſhment all his plans reverſed; he pretended however to know no more of it than the gueſts. But when he found himſelf alone with this wife, he called for the cook, and aſked him how he came to have the audacity to diſobey his orders. "My lord," ſaid the ſervant, throwing himſelf upon his knees, "it was my lady's will; here ſhe is; aſk her yourſelf: I durſt not oppoſe her."

The count was not in a diſpoſition to waſte his time in reprimands; but took a ſtick, and gave the preſident of the kitchen a blow that knocked out one of his eyes; after which, he ordered him immediately to quit his domains, on pain of being hanged, if he was found in them the next day. "And as for you,

you, madam," ſaid he to the counteſs, "who put this fine freak into your head?" She at firſt denied having ſpoke to the cook; but when ſhe found herſelf cloſely preſſed, whether ſhe thought of excuſing herſelf by laying the blame upon another, or that the ſtick had diſconcerted her, ſhe partly acknowledged the advice ſhe had received from her mother at her departure, and entreated the count's forgiveneſs. "That you ſhall have," ſaid he, "but I muſt firſt give you cauſe to remember it." So with the ſame weapon that had ſerved for the cook he imprinted on her back his pardon with ſuch force, that they were obliged to carry her to bed.* She remained there for

* The author in a long note informs us, in explanation of the grounds for the ſevere treatment the wife gets from her huſband both in this and the preceding ſtory, that in the early ages of the French monarchy, the parents and fathers had not only legal authority to correct their wives and children

for ſeveral days, during which ſhe was ſerved with every thing ſhe wanted; and from that moment there was never ſeen a more tractable and obedient wife.

Hear now how the reformation of the old gentleman's ſpouſe was effected.

After three months ſeparation from her daughter ſhe had an inclination to go and pay her a viſit. She took good care to give her ſon-in-law previous notice, and ſet out pompouſly eſcorted by ſix knights, behind whom marched the good man, her huſband; for ſhe graciouſly permitted him to attend her. The count came to meet the troop. He ſhewed great ſatisfaction at ſeeing the huſband, embraced him again and again,

dren, but had even the power of life and death over them, though it is never mentioned by any hiſtorians. This cuſtom, he ſays, ſubſiſted in Bourdeaux ſo late as in the year 1400.

and

and offered him a thouſand civilities; but he ſcarcely took any notice of the wife.

When they were come into the hall, he ſent for the counteſs to make her appearance. She accordingly came down; but whatever pleaſure ſhe might feel to ſee her mother, what ſhe had ſuffered on her account made her tender of teſtifying her ſatisfaction. She therefore did no more than ſalute her with a courteſy, and then went to embrace her father, by whom the count made her a ſignal to ſit down. The mother little uſed to ſuch humiliations, knew not with what countenance to endure it. At ſupper ſhe was ſeated at a ſide table, with her ſix knights, and ſerved with very plain fare. The good man all this while was entertained at his ſon-in-law's table, where all manner of good things abounded, exquiſite diſhes, pleaſant company, and excellent wine. The repaſt being

finiſhed and the cloth taken away, they laughed and diverted themſelves till the deſert appeared; after which they retired to bed.

But the count did not think all that he had done for his father-in-law ſufficient. He could not reflect without chagrin on the condition of that good man, whom a miſchievous wife had long rendered miſerable; and during the night he projected a ſcheme for ridding him of ſo vexatious a yoke. In the morning he begged the old gentleman to come to his apartment. "Sire," ſaid he, "I have got ready a bow and nets; my people have had notice and are ready to attend you. Go and amuſe yourſelf in the purſuit of game: I will in the mean time endeavour to entertain the ladies." The old gentleman ſet off and the people of the caſtle with him; ſo as to leave behind only four ſerjeants at arms, large robuſt men, whom the count took along with

with him to his mother-in-law. "Madam," ſaid he to her, "I beg you will anſwer a queſtion I have to propoſe to you."—"By all means, Sir, if I can."—"Tell me then why you take ſuch inceſſant delight in humbling and thwarting your huſband? For ſurely you muſt know that it is your duty to love, reſpect and obey him."—"Sir, the reaſon is, that he is void of common ſenſe; and ſo ſilly that if I were to let him have his way, he would be perpetually doing ſome fooliſh thing or other".—"Oh! but I ſuſpect another reaſon, and will know whether my ſuſpicions are well founded * * * * *

* There have been various imitations of this ſtory. Among others we find it in the collection of *Boccace* and *Sanſovino*. It has been wrought into a drama entitled, *Peau de Beuf*, and printed, in 1710, at Valenciennes. In this drama, the huſband

Decency forbids my tranſlating any farther. The ſame cauſe made it neceſſary to change the title of the tale, which in the original alludes to the very paſſage that I ſuppreſs. The ſtory finiſhes by repreſenting the mother as mild and complaiſant towards her huſband as ſhe had been before contradictory and imperious; and the author adds:

Let him that has a good wife cheriſh and honour her; but may good fortune

huſband whips his wife, till ſhe is covered all over with blood, and then puts her into an *ox's hide* ſprinkled with pepper and ſalt, where ſhe is kept till ſhe promiſes implicitly to obey her huſband in every thing. From that day he has nothing but ſatisfaction from his marriage. The author, in his preface, gives out that he had taken his plot from an affair that was ſaid to have happened about thirty years before in Germany. *Multa renaſcentur quæ jam cecidere.*

attend

attend thoſe huſbands, who correct their wives, when they are miſchievous; and ſhame to ſuch as ſuffer themſelves to be hen-pecked!

THE SEXTON OF CLUNI.

HUGH, a townſman of Cluni, followed the joint occupations of banker and merchant. On his return one day from a fair with curious merchandizes, and among others with cloth of Amiens, he was attacked in a foreſt by robbers, who carried away his carts. Obliged to ſell off, to ſatisfy his creditors, the ſmall property he had remaining, he found himſelf entirely ruined. *Idoine* his wife then propoſed to him to retire into France,* where ſhe had relations; and they fixed upon the third day for their departure. But the ſexton of the monaſtery, who had for a long time loved *Idoine*, wiſhed to take

* Cluni is in Burgundy, which was then a ſeparate ſtate, though tributary to the crown of France.

the

the advantage of their embrraſſed circumſtances to obtain from the fair one certain favours, which till then he had ſolicited in vain. He made her an offer of an hundred livres, a ſum which his being treaſurer to the monaſtery made it eaſy for him to command. The wife, tempted by ſo conſiderable an offer, which would at once make amends for her loſſes in houſekeeping, feigned to ſurrender, and in concert with her huſband appointed a rendezvous with the monk that very night.

The time being arrived, our eclceſiaſtic eſcapes ſecretly by one of the church gates, of which he kept the key. He delivers the ſum agreed on to the wife, and prepares to accompliſh the other part of the bargain, when the huſband ſuddenly appears armed with a bludgeon. *Hugh* raiſed his arm and made a blow at the ſexton, merely to frighten him and drive him away. But

unfortunately it fell upon his head and killed him on the ſpot. The huſband and wife were then thrown into the utmoſt conſternation. What, cried they, would be their lot, when day-light ſhould diſcover the dead body in their houſe! They were in ſuch trouble that if the gates of the town had been open, they would have made their eſcape that inſtant. However, neceſſity inſpiring them with reſolution, *Idoine* propoſed carrying the body back into the convent, through the church door, of which the ſexton had the keys. *Hugh* raiſed him up on his ſhoulders, and accompanied by his wife, who went to open the gate, he took and placed him upright againſt the door of the privy.

In the courſe of the night the prior of the monaſtery had occaſion to get up, and repair to the place where the dead man ſtood, and he puſhed open the door with ſuch violence, that the body tumbled

tumbled down with prodigious noiſe. He imagined that he had killed the ſexton, on examining the body, and this accident was the more dangerous as the night before having had a quarrel with him he was liable to be charged with murder before the abbey. The beſt expedient he could deviſe, in this puzzling emergency, was to go and place the body at the door of ſome pretty woman of the town, that his death might be aſcribed to the vengeance of a huſband. Now the houſe of *Idoine* being the neareſt, he went and placed it there, ſounded a loud rap on the door and made off.

It had been all over with this good couple, if they had happened then to be aſleep. The dead body being found at their door the next morning, they would inevitably have been apprehended; and the conſciouſneſs of their guilt would quickly have betrayed them.

But

But *Idoine*, hearing the noiſe, made her huſband get up. When they ſaw the carcaſe of the monk, they gave themſelves up for loſt, concluding that the devil had brought him back again for their deſtruction. In order to counteract the deſigns of the malignant ſpirit, *Idoine* gave her huſband a brief on which was inſcribed the name of God. Protected by this ſacred charm, *Hugh* reſumed his courage, and lifted up a ſecond time the ſexton's body to carry it off and get rid of it ſomewhere.

As he paſſed by the houſe of *Thibault* a farmer belonging to the convent, he perceived a heap of dung lying there; and conceived an idea of burying the ſexton in it; to which he was further urged by the recollection, that as the ſexton frequented *Thibault's* houſe, the latter might be ſuppoſed to have killed him. As he began to make an opening in the ſtraw, he found a ſack to all appearance

appearance full. "Oh, ho!" ſaid he to himſelf, "has this fellow too killed his monk? Well, they will be good company for each other, and he ſhall have the credit of them both." *Hugh* then untied the ſack, and was greatly ſurprized to find a hog in it. In fact *Thibault* had killed one againſt the approaching Chriſtmas feſtival; but two thieves had come that night to ſteal it from him; and waiting till it was late enough for them to carry it off without danger, they had concealed it under that dunghill, and were gone to drink at a neighbouring night cellar. *Hugh* without conſidering whom the hog belonged to, takes it out of the ſack, puts the monk in its place, and returns home with his prey.

The two rogues had at the tavern fallen in with ſome jolly fellows of the ſame profeſſion, and taken to drinking with them. One of the ſet having accidentally obſerved, that the wine would taſte

taſte better, if they had a piece of broiled pork along with it, one of the two hog ſtealers offered to treat his companion with what he longed for, and inſtantly went to the dung-hill for his hog. He returned to his friends with the ſack; and at the ſight of it they exclaimed at the fine ſize of the animal. They then aſk for wood and make a good fire. One runs for a knife, another for a gridiron, a third for ſtraw. Meanwhile the ſervant girl unties the ſack, and raiſes the other end, to let the hog drop out: when ſuddenly out rolls the monk. She ſets up a terrible cry; the maſter of the houſe himſelf runs up and aſks who committed the murder. "I killed no one," anſwered the thief; "but had only purloined a hog, and the devil, to trick me, has turned it into a monk. At any rate, it belongs to *Thibault*, and I am reſolved the clod-poll ſhall not loſe his bargain." The rogue then returns to the farmer's houſe, and fixes the corpſe

corpſe by the neck to the ſame cord by which the hog was ſuſpended.

All this could not be done without noiſe. *Thibault*, awaking, went to feel if his hog was in the right place; but the cord, too ſlight for its new weight, ſnaps all at once, and the monk falls upon the farmer and knocks him down. This laſt cries out for help, calls to his wife and ſervants: who come with lights and find him lying under the ſexton.

Thibault ſoon recognized the dead man. He was not without his fears, leſt, in caſe the ſexton ſhould be found in his houſe, he ſhould be accuſed of the murder. He therefore began to conſider the means of getting rid of him immediately; for day was already dawning. In his ſtable there was a young colt, that had never been broke in, and conſequently was quite wild. He deſired it might be brought to him, placed

the

the monk on its back, and tied him to the ſaddle that he might not ſlip off; then after having fixed a lance in his hand and hung a ſhield round his ſhoulders, to make him appear like an armed knight, he drove the horſe with a ſmart ſtroke of his whip into the town. At the ſame time, he and his ſervants ran after the beaſt, crying out with all their force, "ſtop the monk, ſtop the monk!" Theſe cries joined with thoſe of the mob made the colt ſtill wilder. He galloped on at full ſpeed, and, the gate of the convent being open, ruſhed into it. The prior, happening to meet him there, and not having time to get out of the way, was ſtruck with the lance and killed upon the ſpot. The monks ran on all ſides, crying, "Have a care, the ſexton is gone mad!" Twenty times running did the frightened horſe traverſe the gardens and the cloiſters. Thence he ruſhed into the kitchen, where he deſtroyed every thing in his way and broke both

ſhield

ſhield and lance againſt the walls. At length, in running about from place to place, he comes to a large hole, dug for the purpoſe of forming a well, and goes headlong to the bottom with his rider. It was to this fall they attributed the death of the ſexton. No one knew the whole of the adventure. As for *Hugh*, he had the good fortune to gain a hog and a hundred livres. *Thibault* was the only loſer; but he got amply repaid by the monks for the death of his colt: ſo that they after all paid the piper.*

* Few tales have been ſo much in vogue as this. It is to be found in many modern ſtory books, and has been tranſlated into moſt European languages.

THE HERMIT, THAT WAS DEBAUCHED BY THE DEVIL.

THE devil had for a long time tempted a hermit, without being able to lead him into miſchief. Enraged at length to be foiled in all his deſigns, he gives notice to the hermit, that he would tear him to pieces with his claws, if he did not reſolve on committing ſome deadly crime; and lets him have the option of three, drunkenneſs, manſlaughter or adultery. The anchoret deſired the reſpite of a few days to make his choice in; and after much reflection, he determined to get drunk, as the moſt venial offence of the three.

At the foot of the mountain on which he had built his hut, there was a mill; and our hermit had from his near neighbourhood contracted an intimate friendſhip with

with the miller. This laſt, having one day caught ſome fiſh, invited the hermit to partake of it with him and his wife. The other accepted the invitation, with the intention to diſcharge his obligation with the devil, and get rid at once of the ſin he had choſen in preference. The holy man accordingly drank ſo copiouſly, that on riſing to return home he could ſcarcely ſtand upon his legs. The miller's wife, though ſhe had alſo drunk more than her uſual quantity, offered to aſſiſt him with her arm; and they walked out as well as they could together. But on the road the woman grows giddy, ſinks down upon the turf, and falls aſleep. The hermit, heated by the liquor, finds his deſires kindled at the ſight, and takes the advantage of her condition to lie down by her. The miller, who ſees from his mill what they are about, ſnatches up a hatchet, and runs towards them; but, at the inſtant he is going to ſtrike, makes

a falſe ſtep and tumbles: the other ſeizes the hatchet and kills his antagoniſt. Thus, in the twinkling of an eye, did the hermit perpetrate adultery and manſlaughter; and, in endeavouring to over-reach the devil by committing the leaſt of the three ſins, became guilty of the whole three.*

* The monk, who invented this fable, makes the hermit, as in the caſe of all other enormous crimes, do penance, and afterwards tranſports him to Paradiſe. This ſtory as well as the following, is one of thoſe which Mr. *Le Grand* calls the *contes devots*, and which he acknowledges to be in general the *ne plus ultra* of ſuperſtitious folly.

THE HERMIT THAT BROKE HIS NECK.

A Hermit had conſtructed his cell on the brow of a hill that was ſituated cloſe to a wood, in which a robber had eſtabliſhed himſelf to plunder the travellers paſſing that way. The man of God met the robber one day, and preached to him with ſo much energy and with ſuch effect, that the rogue fell upon his knees, confeſſed his crimes, and implored forgiveneſs. The hermit enjoined him never to tell a falſehood, and to render to his neighbour all the ſervices in his power. The robber returned to his place of abode, determined to obſerve the injunctions of the hermit in both thoſe particulars.

In croſſing the wood, he eſpies two naked men, who had been ſtripped by

other thieves, and tied, their hands behind their backs, to a tree. He inſtantly runs to their reſcue. As he advances towards them, a branch of the tree ſtrikes him in the eye and knocks it out; but the pain it gives him is not powerful enough to prevent him from accompliſhing the charitable office he had undertaken. He even went ſo far in his benevolence, as to give them a part of his own clothes to cover them.

A few minutes after, he perceives a leper, * who in the attempt to croſs a river on horſeback, was hurried away by the current, and in danger of being drowned. Our penitent throws himſelf

* Leproſy was in thoſe diſtant ages a very common diſorder; to prevent the communication of the diſeaſe very ſevere laws were enacted to prevent their mixing in ſociety; ſo that to aſſiſt, to receive, and above all to *embrace* one afflicted with that infectious diſtemper, muſt have been an act of unbounded charity.——

into

into the water, ſwims to the drowning man, catches him in his arms, brings him ſafe upon the bank, and preſents him with his purſe. At that very inſtant, he perceives three armed knights. Their brother had a few days before been killed by the robber, whom they were in ſearch of, to revenge the murder. Thinking they ſaw him, by the deſcription they had received of him, they aſked him in a threatening manner, if he was not the aſſaſſin of the foreſt. He, recollecting that he was enjoined not to utter a falſehood, told them plainly, that he was. They inſtantly ſtab him. He dies, forgiving them his death; and angels deſcending from heaven carry up his ſoul with ſhouts of joy.

This triumphant aſcenſion is perceived by the hermit, and it excites his envy. "What!" ſaith he, to himſelf, "is this abominable out-law ſaved for

for an hour or two of penitence! After a whole life of aſſaſſinations and robberies, two or three good actions do his buſineſs. I am then, ſurely, a madman to have come and waſted here the prime of my life, to have abſtained from all pleaſures, and for the courſe of fifty years, to have faſted, watched and worn ſack-cloth. Since Paradiſe is earned ſo cheaply, let who will be a hermit; for my part, I renounce the profeſſion. I'll return into the world, and after I have enjoyed myſelf thoroughly there, when I perceive death approaching, I'll repent, aſk forgiveneſs, and be ſaved like that robber." Having finiſhed theſe words, the hermit gives his hut a kick to knock it down: but in his fury he loſes his balance, rolls down the hill, breaks his neck, and dying is carried into hell by devils.

THE ANGEL AND THE HERMIT.

A Certain perſon had embraced the life of a hermit from his earlieſt years. It often happens that alone, in a wood, one may enjoy more happineſs than in the ſociety of a convent or even than in that of the wide world. This hermit, for a long courſe of years, had mortified himſelf and faſted, to purify his ſoul. Watching and labour, heat and cold, all extremes were grown familiar to him; but after ſo long a penitence he began at laſt to think that he had not been ſufficiently recompenſed by God, and to murmur that he had not been raiſed to one of thoſe enviable conditions to which he was often a witneſs when gathering his food. "What!" ſaid he, "does the Almighty load with bleſſings ſuch perſons as neglect him, and leave another that ſerves him faithfully in wretchedneſs

wretchedneſs and want? Why did he not create the world an equal benefit to all mankind? why ſo unequal a partition of good and evil? ſo ſtrange a diſtribution confounds me!"

As the good man, in the courſe of his recluſe life, had acquired but little experience, this conſideration gave him much embarraſſment. He was indeed ſo much puzzled by it, that he reſolved at laſt to viſit the world, and to ſeek for a ſolution of his doubts. He accordingly took a ſtaff and ſet forward on his journey.

He had proceeded but a little way from his cell, when he was met by a young man, of a very agreeable mien and well proportioned figure, holding a javelin in his hand. His dreſs was that of a ſerjeant at arms, and he ſeemed to belong to the train of ſome rich lord. It was an angel, who had concealed himſelf

ſelf in that diſguiſe, in order to paſs undiſcovered. They ſaluted each other and entered into converſation. "Who is your maſter," ſaid the hermit? "Sir it is he who is maſter of the whole world."—"For a certainty, you could not have a better. And where are you going thus equipped?"—"I have in this quarter a great variety of acquaintance, and I am going to viſit them. But it is diſagreeable to travel alone, and I wiſh to have ſome perſon to accompany me. You will confer a laſting obligation on me, if you will do me that favour." The hermit whoſe project would be greatly facilitated by ſuch viſits, readily agreed to the propoſal; and they proceeded together.

The night overtook them, before they could get clear of the wood. Fortunately they deſcried a hermitage, whither they went to beg a lodging. The hermit gave them as good a reception as his

his hut could afford; he ſpread great plenty of his frugal fare before them; but when they came to ſay grace, the travellers remarked, that inſtead of praying like them, the hermit was buſy in wiping and rubbing a cup made of curious wood, which he kept by him and drank out of during the repaſt.

The angel obſerved where he laid it up; and riſing ſoftly in the night, took and hid it: and the next morning, on ſetting off, without ſaying a word carried it along with him. On the road he mentioned the circumſtance to his companion, who was quite indignant at his behaviour, and wanted to go back and return the cup to the hermit. "Hold," ſaid the angel; "I had my reaſons for acting in this manner; and you ſhall in due time be made acquainted with them. Perhaps you may have further motives hereafter for wondering at my conduct; but know that whatever you ſee me do,

do, it is not without ſufficient cauſe, and remember that you be not ſcandalized at it." The hermit on this reproof was ſilent: he bowed and purſued his journey.

A prodigious fall of rain, which continued the whole day, wet them entirely through their clothes, they not being able to obtain any ſhelter. Night being come, fatigued and half dead with cold they entered a town; and as neither of them had money, they were obliged to go from houſe to houſe, aſking in the name of God for an aſylum. Every where they met with a refuſal, for as we obſerve people in general love money ſtill better than they do God, the caſe was much the ſame at that time. The rain ſtill pouring down, they thought it beſt to go and take their ſeat upon the ground, under a flight of ſtone ſteps.

Theſe ſteps formed part of a tolerably

handſome houſe belonging to an old uſurer, a very rich man, but one who would not part with a farthing to get his father into Paradiſe. The avaricious landlord ſhewed his head for a moment at the window; when our travellers repreſenting to him the ſad condition they were in, ſupplicated him through charity to grant them a place to lie in. He made them no anſwer; but ſhut the window and retired.

"Brother," ſaid the angel, "let us remain here, ſince we can procure no better accommodation; this pent-houſe will at leaſt protect us from the rain." But a female ſervant, who over heard their complaints and came to examine the cauſe, had more compaſſion than her maſter, and admitted them into the houſe. She gave them a little ſtraw, and they lay down upon it, under the ſtaircaſe. A few minutes afterwards, ſhe brought them a ſmall diſh of peaſe, the remains of the miſer's ſupper; and

in this manner they paſſed the night, without fire, without light, and almoſt periſhing with cold and moiſture.

On the dawn of day, the hermit wanted to depart. "No," ſaid the angel; "I will not go away, till I have taken leave of our hoſt, and thanked him for his hoſpitality." He went immediately to find him, and, as a mark of his gratitude begged his acceptance of a ſmall preſent; which was no other than the cup which he had ſtolen the day before from the hermit. The uſurer did not hesitate to accept it. He wiſhed them a good journey, and aſſured them that if, on their return, they brought him ſome other trifling boon, they ſhould be provided with the ſame lodging.

When they were clear of the town, the hermit could not help declaring his aſtoniſhment to his companion: "You want to put me to the proof, I imagine," ſaid

he, "when you behave in this ſtrange manner! you ſteal from that good old man who entertained us ſo hoſpitably, merely to give to that blood-ſucker who denied us ſhelter. Is it your maxim to act in oppoſition to the practice of other men?"—"I have already warned you to be circumſpect in your concluſions," anſwered the angel; conſider that you have paſſed all your life in woods, and that you have had no experience of the world. Once more I deſire you to follow me and be ſurpriſed at nothing."

The third night they went to take up their lodging in a rich monaſtery. They were received charitably and ſerved with abundance; but the next morning, the angel before his departure ſet fire to the ſtraw of his bed, and took off his companion along with him. As they were aſcending a hill, at ſome diſtance, he deſired the hermit to turn his head and look behind them. By this time the flames

flames had reached the battlements of the monaſtery; all was on fire. The hermit, at the ſight, threw out a loud cry, "Wretch that I am! behold me now an incendiary! whither ſhall I fly? where hide myſelf?" In ſaying which he rolled himſelf upon the earth, ſtruck his breaſt, and curſed the hour when he fell in with a man ſo abominable. "It is in vain that I warn you," ſaid the angel, "you again relapſe into your former error: but for the laſt time I caution you to be attentive and follow me peaceably."

He was at no loſs for a lodging that night, but took up his abode, with the hermit, at the houſe of a reputable tradeſman. This was a reſpectable old man, grown grey with years; he lived in a pious manner with his wife, whom he loved tenderly, and a child of ten years, the only product of his marriage, and the conſolation of his age. He prepared an entertainment for his gueſts,

himſelf waſhed their feet, inſiſted on their eating with him at table; and the next day at parting, embraced them and bade them a kind adieu.

To gain the high road it was neceſſary for the travellers to paſs through the whole town, and to croſs a river by which it was bounded on one ſide. The angel, pretending that he was not well acquainted with the ſtreets, prevailed on the good man to permit his ſon to acompany them as far as the bridge, and put them in the right road. The zealous hoſt went immediately and awakened the boy; who got up with alacrity to attend the two travellers. But when they came upon the bridge, and the boy was taking leave of them, the angel, giving him a ſudden puſh, plunged the youth headlong into the river, where he was ſwallowed up and diſappeared. "I am ſatisfied with what I have done; are you alſo contented?" ſaid he to the hermit.

This

This laſt, at hearing his words, ſeized with diſmay and terror, began to run with all his might, and never ſtopped till he had got a conſiderable way into the country. There he ſat down to fetch breath, and to lament his fate. "What have I been doing? unhappy, miſerable mortal! I abandoned my cell, where I might have ſerved God all my life in peace; and he has, as a puniſhment for my folly, delivered me over to a demon, and made me an accomplice of his helliſh crimes!"

He was about to proceed in his lamentation, when the angel, who had followed him to ſet him right, inſtantly appeared, and addreſſed him as follows: "Friend, liſten to me. The myſterious plans of the Almighty on earth gave you offence in your cell. You dared to call in queſtion his wiſdom, and to prepare yourſelf to conſult earthly beings, and to endeavour ſounding the impenetrable

penetrable abyſs of his councils. You had periſhed that moment, if his juſtice had given you up. But he was diſpoſed to employ an angel to enlighten you; and it is I who have been charged with that duty. In vain have I endeavoured to ſhew you that world which you ſought without knowing it: my leſſons have not been underſtood; and I muſt explain myſelf more clearly."

He then entered into the particulars of his conduct, and the explanation of his motives for acting in the manner he had done. He ſpoke of the puerile attachment of the hermit for his cup.— "You ſaw," ſaid he, "that vile object occupy his heart, and make him forget the holy obligation of prayer. Henceforward, now that he is deprived of it, his mind, free from other affections, may be entirely devoted to God. I gave the uſurer the cup, as a return for the reception he was obliged to give us at his

his houſe; becauſe God leaves no good action unrewarded; but it is the only recompenſe that man will receive: his avarice will one day be puniſhed. The monks whoſe convent I reduced to aſhes, were at firſt poor and laborious, and conſequently led an exemplary life. Enriched by the indiſcreet liberalities of believers, they have been corrupted; for it is a misfortune in monks to be rich. In that palace, which they had erected for their abode, their whole time was occupied in ſchemes for extending their poſſeſſions, or in intrigues to ſupplant each other in the offices of the monaſtery. If they appeared in their hall, it was only to hear tales, or to paſs their time in trifling amuſements. Inſtitutions, rules, church regulations, duties, all were neglected. God to correct them, thought proper to reduce them to their former poverty. They will rebuild a monaſtery, that will be leſs magnificent; this work will afford ſubſiſtence

to many labourers and poor artiſts; and they themſelves, being obliged as in their firſt ſtate to cultivate the earth, will become poſſeſſed of more humility and goodneſs."

"You force my approbation of your conduct," anſwered the hermit; "but why did you deſtroy that innocent child, who ſeemed ſo eager to render us a ſervice? why deprive of its only comfort the old age of that reſpectable man, whoſe benevolence we experienced?"—"That old man, by whom we were received only becauſe I took the ſhape of one whom he knew, had for thirty years been employed in acts of charity! Never did the poor preſent themſelves in vain at his door; he even ſtinted himſelf to ſupply them. But ſince he has had a ſon, and particularly ſince that ſon has begun to grow up, his blind fondneſs urging him to amaſs a large patrimony for the youth to inherit, he has become auſtere

and

and avaricious. Day and night his thoughts have been engaged on profit; and ſoon he would have laid aſide all ſenſe of ſhame, and turned uſurer. The child, dying in innocence, has been received in heaven; the father having no longer any motive for avarice, will recur to his old praiſe-worthy maxims; both will be ſaved; and without what you called an atrocious crime both of them had periſhed. Such are the ſecret deſigns of God, ſince you wiſh to know them. But remember that you called them in queſtion; repair to your cell and repent. For my part I muſt return to heaven."

In ſaying theſe laſt words, the angel threw off his earthly diſguiſe, and diſappeared. The hermit, proſtrating his face upon the earth, thanked the Almighty for his paternal reprimand. He then returned to his hermitage; where he paſſed the remainder of his days in

ſo much ſanctity, that he merited not only forgiveneſs of his error, but alſo the recompenſe promiſed to a virtuous life.*

* This ſtory has been adopted by *Voltaire*, and is given at full length in his moral romance of *Zadig*, or the *Book of Fate*.

THE

THE KNIGHT AND THE SWORD, AN HEROIC TALE.

KING *Arthur* reſided at Carduel with the queen, his conſort, *Gauvain*, his nephew,* and a ſelect body of knights. The ſpring was advancing, and the weather delightfully ſerene. *Gauvain*, wiſhing to take the advantage of it, called for his horſe, and having put on his golden ſpurs †, without any other

* This *Gauvain*, the hero of the preſent ſtory, was the privy counſellor and right hand knight of King *Arthur*. He was one of the moſt celebrated of the *round table*.

† The golden, or gilt, ſpur was the diſtinctive emblem of knighthood; eſquires being permitted only to wear thoſe of ſilver. In the infancy of chivalry, they were a mere ſpecies of bodkins, which were ſtuck into the heel of the ſhoe: the rowel was afterwards added, and it grew to an enormous ſize. In the 15th century, it was as big as

other arms beſide his ſword, his lance and ſhield, he took the road towards the foreſt. The beauty of the ſky, the melody of the birds, and the fragrance of the growing verdure lulled him inſenſibly into an agreeable reverie: he indulged in it for ſome time; and, on recollecting himſelf, perceived that he had wandered out of the beaten track. The circumſtance of the approaching night, threatening him with forlornneſs in the wood, gave him great uneaſineſs. He endeavoured then to return back the way he came, but after purſuing various courſes ſtraight forward, to the right and to the left, he only got aſtray the further.

Gauvain was in this dilemma, when he deſcried through the thicket, at a diſ-

the palm of a man's hand. When a knight was created, the firſt ceremony was putting on his gilt ſpurs, and this was commonly done by the prince or ſovereign who conferred the dignity. The reverſe was obſerved on the degradation of a knight.

tance

tance, the light of a large fire. On his approach to it, he perceived a horſe, faſtened to a tree, and near the fire a knight ſeated. *Gauvain* inſtantly went up and addreſſed him, deſiring to be directed in the road to Carduel. The knight offered himſelf to lead the way to the caſtle, as ſoon as the day would permit, and in the mean while begged the favour of the other's company. *Gauvain* then diſmounted; and wrapping himſelf up in his mantle, ſat down by the ſtranger and entered into converſation with him. Being naturally of an eaſy and open temper, he aſſumed in their diſcourſe, his uſual frankneſs; his companion, on the other hand, was all artifice and deceit, of which the reaſon will appear ſhortly. At length after having converſed for ſome time, ſleep overpowered their faculties, and they ſlumbered till the day-light appeared to rouſe them. "We are at a conſiderable diſtance from Carduel," then obſerved the ſtrange

knight; "and I imagine you have not had your ſupper; my caſtle is not far diſtant; come along with me, and accept without ceremony a repaſt that ſhall be provided for you with alacrity." *Gauvain* aſſented, without heſitation to this propoſal, and they accordingly purſued their journey. But ſcarcely had they got clear of the foreſt, before the ſtranger aſked leave to puſh on before his fellow-traveller. "I have nobody," ſaid he, to announce your coming; * permit me to

* It was cuſtomary, in the days of chivalry, when any one was to be received with peculiar diſtinction, not only for the ſervants, but alſo the miſtreſs of the houſe, with her daughters, to come forward and meet the knight. They held his ſtirrups while he diſmounted, and helped to diſarm him, with their own hands, and then furniſhed him with ſome of thoſe commodious habits, which were kept for the purpoſe in the caſtles.

The knight's reſidence is repreſented on a mountain. This, before the invention of fire arms and

to quit you for a few moments, that I may diſcharge that office. You ſee my manſion on the brow of yonder hill; it is there I ſhall expect your arrival." This ſaid, he ſet out on full ſpeed; and *Gauvain*, who did not in the leaſt ſuſpect his courteſy, followed him at a moderate pace.

A little farther he fell in with four ſhepherds, whom he ſaluted. Theſe men, from the martial air and noble appearance of our hero, were ſtrongly prepoſſeſſed in favour of him; and one of them exclaimed, "gallant knight, you deſerve a better fate than what you are going to encounter!" The prince at firſt beſtowed no attention on theſe words, and rode on;

and artillery, was the moſt favourable ſituation. Such fortreſſes could ſeldom be reduced, unleſs by famine. The ſame principle cauſed the greateſt part of the antient cities to be conſtructed on eminences.

but ſuddenly he ſtopped on reflection, and turned about to aſk the ſhepherds an explanation of their untoward greeting. They anſwered him plainly, that if they felt any regret on his account, it was becauſe they had ſeen ſo many brave knights go like him, to the neighbouring caſtle, not one of whom was ever known to return. *Gawain* on that aſked them ſeveral queſtions, which they could not ſolve with certainty; for as no one had been able to tell what had happened to him, all they could go upon, was common rumour and ſurmiſe. They could only acquaint him, that, according to thoſe vague reports, the knight would not ſuffer the leaſt contradiction; that his cuſtom was, to put to the ſevereſt trial ſuch as came to his caſtle, and that on the moſt minute reſiſtance on their part, they were immediately diſpatched.

This information, given with all the appearance of truth, was calculated to diſmay;

diſmay; and *Gauvain* for ſome moments heſitated, whether he ſhould proceed or go back. But the conſideration of the little reliance that ought to be placed on ſuch ſuggeſtions, perhaps thrown out maliciouſly to try his courage; the apprehenſion above all of being hereafter reproached with the breach of his promiſe, and yielding for once in his life to the influence of fear, rendered him inſenſible to the danger, and reſolute in going through with the adventure.

He was expected at the caſtle. No ſooner did he appear, than the lord himſelf and the whole family came out to meet him with all the marks of ſatisfaction and good will. They took his horſe, diſarmed him, and uſhered him into an apartment richly decorated, where the knight deſired him to ſit down till the repaſt was ſerved up. "My good Sir," ſaid he, "act here as if you were at home; if any thing is diſpleaſing to you, declare

declare it with the ſame freedom as in your own houſe; for I would have you conſider yourſelf as the maſter of every thing you ſee here." *Gauvain*, not having forgot what the ſhepherds hinted to him, declared himſelf entirely ſatisfied. A few moments after, the knight brought into the room a young lady of the moſt dazzling beauty.* This was his daughter. He ordered her to be ſubſervient in

* Here follows, in the original, the deſcription of the lady. The author has been careful to obſerve, more than once, that his heroine was of a fair complexion. This was the kind of beauty held moſt in eſtimation. All the poets of that age celebrated the praiſes of ſcarcely any but fair beauties. This prejudice obtained in ſuch force, that *Deſchamps*, a writer of thoſe times, reckons among the duties of education, the care of rendering children's hair of a light colour. When perukes were introduced, the ſame partiality to light hair continued. This appears to have been the prevalent complexion among the Gauls; and it is only by wars, emigrations, conqueſts, and commerce, that the

in every particular to the will of *Gauvain*; and, that the latter might be under no reſtraint, he left him and the damſel together.

The words and action of the knight, together with the charms of the young lady, had ſo impreſſed the prince, that he remained for ſome time in ſilence. Having recovered his ideas a little, he found himſelf in a condition of no ſmall embarraſſment, ſhut up with the daugh- of his hoſt, to whom he was apprehen- ſive of paying either too much or too little attention. He ventured, however, to tender to her the homage of his valour, and to ſolicit the honour of being her knight. Through all his embarraſſment and circumſpection, the young beauty perceived, without difficulty, in the eyes

the brown inhabitants of the ſouthern parts of Europe, mixing with the Gauls, have inſenſibly changed the original colour of the French nation.

of

of *Gauvain* the impreſſion ſhe had made upon him. She, on her part, was far from having any diſlike to him, but had been ſtruck with his handſome appearance. Nevertheleſs, fear combated within the favourable ſentiments with which the prince had inſpired her. She was for ſome time agitated between the contending emotions; but love at laſt gaining the advantage, ſhe warned *Gauvain*, after making him vow the moſt inviolable ſecrecy, in the ſame manner with the ſhepherds, not on any account to contradict her father, but to preſerve the moſt implicit and reſpectful condeſcenſion towards him. "You heard him," ſaid ſhe, "order me to obey your will in every particular. But, beware! for you are no more, if you venture to require any indulgence."

The knight again entered the room to conduct his gueſt to table." When I have a friend to entertain," ſaid he, as he

he ſat down, "I am greatly diſpleaſed, unleſs he orders what he has an inclination for, finds fault with what he diſlikes, and, in ſhort, conducts himſelf in every reſpect as if he were at his own table." After this declaration, he offers a part of every thing to *Gauvain*, makes him drink copiouſly, and give his opinion of each diſh. The gueſt eats and drinks without ſaying much, and there can be no doubt finds every thing excellent in its kind. The knight even goes ſo far as to offer him his daughter; to which he makes not the leaſt objection, but thankfully accepts the offer.

After the repaſt, the owner of the caſtle, being diſpoſed to go to the wood, according to cuſtom, in ſearch of adventures, ordered a horſe to be ſaddled; and before his departure commanded his gueſt, on pain of death, not to leave the caſtle, without permiſſion, but to remain there till his return. He, however, left

left his daughter with the prince, to amuſe him; for his pleaſure and entertainment were to be above all conſulted. *Gauvain* in aſtoniſhment knew not what to think of this incredible mixture of civility and harſhneſs, of politeneſs and brutality. Nevertheleſs, from the honeſty of his own diſpoſition he derived arguments to excuſe the knight's whimſical conduct, and could not be induced to believe that his ſpontaneous invitation and ſtudied careſſes could lead to any preconcerted miſchief. The damſel, whoſe regard for him had already given her ſome alarm, began to entertain ſtill more ſerious apprehenſions. She wiſhed to penetrate into the myſterious artifices that were on foot againſt her lover, in order to put him upon his guard. But all ſhe could do, was to caution him again to acquieſce chearfully in all that ſhould be required of him.

At ſupper he was aſſailed with the ſame

ſame importunity as in the morning. But the events of the evening led to ſtill greater aſtoniſhment, when the father, at riſing from table, ordered a bed to be got ready for him in the hall, and reſigned his own to the ſtranger and his daughter. *Gauvain*, at this declaration, was extremely puzzled; he was afraid of being killed if he objected; and thought himſelf in no leſs danger, if he aſſented: ſo he had not reſolution to reply. Without waiting for his anſwer, they conducted him to the chamber with the maid. Twelve wax candles were alighted; and that he might all night feaſt his eyes upon her charms, he was expreſsly ordered not to extinguiſh them. They afterwards locked the door of the room, and carried off the key. The damſel then lay down, and *Gauvain* placed himſelf beſide her.

Whatever dangers he had been warned of before, they could not remain be-

fore his eyes in that ſituation. He was thrown off his guard, and had very near forgot himſelf, when the lady told him, ſhe was not there unprotected. This declaration ſurpriſed him; he threw his eyes around the room and could perceive nothing, till he was directed to obſerve a ſword ſuſpended near the window. "That ſword," ſaid the lady, "is enchanted; it watches over and protects me; and it is the laſt danger my father has reſerved for thoſe who have been ſo fortunate as to eſcape the others. The inſtant of any indiſcretion, it leaves the ſcabbard and comes to pierce the guilty perſon. Of more than twenty knights, who like you have lain in this bed, not one has left it alive. Do not, my dear friend, I intreat you, expoſe yourſelf to the ſame fate, nor bring upon me an affliction, that could terminate only with my life."

Theſe words increaſed ſtill more the perplexity

perplexity of *Gauvain*. Never had he heard of ſuch an incident. The whole affair indeed appeared to him ſo extraordinary, that he could ſcarcely believe it real; he even was tempted to ſuſpect the ſtory to be merely an artifice of modeſty, reduced to its laſt ſhift. He was proceeding to make the experiment; when the damſel gave a ſudden cry, and the ſword, darting like a thunder bolt, came and wounded the prince, and then returned to its former ſituation. He was ſeized with conſternation; while his companion reproached him, with tenderneſs, for raſhly expoſing himſelf to the danger; at the ſame time ſhe congratulated him, on having only incurred a ſlight wound, and urged him to follow her example, by compoſing himſelf to ſleep.

But the wax lights ſtill burned, and gazing was not prohibited by the enchanted ſword. That tantalizing light

was the torment of *Gauvain*. He ſoon found himſelf tranſported, and could not remain any longer in conſtraint. What would King *Arthur* and his courtiers ſay of a knight, to whom ſo charming an opportunity was preſented, and whom the fear of danger withheld from ſeizing on it? what would they think of the incredible tale of a ſword, wielded by no arm, conducted by nobody? what raillery, what ſatire would it not give riſe to?--He formed his reſolution, rather to ſuffer death than be deterred. As he moved towards the damſel the ſword cleaved its paſſage through the air, and again drew blood from him.

After this ſecond leſſon, it may be imagined that the prince no longer found fault with the luſtre of the wax lights; and that during the remainder of the night, how long-ſoever it might appear to him, the railleries of *Arthur's* courtiers were

were but a ſecondary conſideration with him.

The father had been no leſs watchful, but from a different cauſe. He was impatient to know the ſucceſs of his temptation, and waited eagerly for the arrival of the morn to announce it to him. But what was his ſurprize to find the ſtranger living! "By my honour," ſaid *Gauvain*, "I have done nothing to merit death." His bed cloaths, however, pierced through and bloody, betrayed him; and, notwithſtanding the diſcretion he boaſted, he was obliged to avow the truth. He was aſked his name, that name ſo illuſtrious, and celebrated already for ſo many brilliant exploits. The knight, when informed of it, ſeemed to be impreſſed with veneration, and confeſſed, in his turn, that, in ſpite of him, the enchantment of the ſword was finiſhed. "It was its duty," ſaid he, "to ſpare the beſt and moſt gallant of knights:

you were the deſtined huſband for my daughter; to unravel the decree of fate has coſt the lives of many brave men. But ſince the diſcovery is at laſt effected, accept her hand, together with my domain and my caſtle." *

Gauvain thanked the knight, but declared himſelf more than ſatisfied with the damſel. It was ſoon circulated through the neighbourhood, that with-

* The marriage in the original, is not quite ſo formal. The father tells *Gauvain* that, ſince he has terminated the enchantment, the caſtle, his daughter, and the ſword are his property. Such was then the law of arms. Whatever was the object of an enterprize belonged of right to the conqueror. It was the knight's fault to riſque his daughter. If we were to judge from the manners of that age, as deſcribed in the romances, illegitimacy of birth was no reproach in the perſon of a warrior; and the moſt eminent among them made no ſcruple in diſpoſing of their daughters, without the form of a marriage ceremony. But for the honour of the age we ſhould hope this practice prevailed only in the romances.

in

in the caſtle was a knight, by whom the fatal ſword had been eluded. Congratulations arrived from all parts, and his triumph was celebrated that very day with feaſting and diverſions. After the feaſt, minſtrels * were brought into the hall,

* We have already taken notice of theſe ambulating troops of muſicians, who, at great feſtivals, in the plenary courts, and at marriages, uſed to entertain the better claſs of people. This profeſſion, which the poverty, the libertiniſm and the vagabond life of its followers, had brought into great diſrepute, muſt have nevertheleſs required a prodigious verſatility of talent, and a variety of attainments, which at preſent we ſeldom find united in the ſame perſon; and this concurrence of accompliſhments muſt have been ſtill more extraordinary in that age of ignorance. For beſides all the old and new ſongs, the current tales, ſtories and fables of the times, which they made it a point to know; beſides the romances, which they were alſo bound to be in part acquainted with, they could declaim, ſing, compoſe, and play on various inſtruments. Many of theſe minſtrels were authors, and made themſelves the pieces they ſung or

hall, which reſounded with the notes of violins, pipes and flutes; ſongs were ſung by others, accompanied by the harp and cymbals. Romances were read, and ſtories told, while the gueſts played at cheſs, at hazard and other games.* The amuſements

or recited. Such were *Rutebeuf* and *Baudouin de Condé*, who invented ſeveral in theſe volumes. To all theſe, others added the tricks of jugglers and mountebanks. They knew the uſe of more than thirty inſtruments, but chiefly confined themſelves to ſuch as they could accompany with the voice.

* The games ſpecified here, are *hazard*; one called *mine*, of which our author does not know the nature; *tables*, which are moſt probably the ſame with what is vulgarly called *draughts*; and *echecs* or *cheſs*.

That of the *tables* is very antient; it is mentioned by *Gregory of Tours*. Mr. *Frèret* has proved, that the romance writers are the firſt who have ſpoken of cheſs in the weſtern part of the world. This philoſophic game was derived from India, and introduced by the Perſians among the Greeks

amuſements were thus prolonged till evening; when all retired to reſt. As for the two lovers, they were conducted in form to that very room, in which they had paſſed the preceding night; and, on this occaſion, as the one had no enchanted ſword to dread, ſo the other had no pretence for reſiſtance.

After making ſome ſtay in the caſtle, entirely given up to enjoyment, *Gauvain*

Greeks and Saracens; from whom our cruſaders acquired it. The changes that have taken place in that which we call the *queen*, but which they termed the *virgin*, ſuggeſts an intereſting reflection. This in the eaſt is called the *miniſter*, and can only move over one ſpace at a time like the pawns; neither is it allowed to move more than two ſpaces from the *king*. This *miniſter* was by the gallant ſpirit of chivalry converted into a lady: it being afterwards found that ſo much conſtraint in its motion was ſuitable only to the bondage of the aſiatic dames, they allowed it as much freedom in its movements as it could poſſibly have, and made it the moſt important on the board.

began

began to think of his departure. So long an abſence might have given ſome uneaſineſs to his royal uncle. He therefore took leave of the knight, and ſet out with his lady for Carduel. She rode a horſe very richly capariſoned. He accompanied her on his great palfrey, with the ſame arms as he had on leaving *Arthur's* palace. But ſcarcely had they proceeded half a league, before the lady ſtopping ſhort, declared her vexation at having left behind at the caſtle two favourite dogs, which ſhe had bred herſelf. The gallant earneſtly returned for them, and quickly brought them to her; which done, they purſued their route.

About midway acroſs the foreſt, a knight, armed at all points, ſuddenly made his appearance. He was traveling alone; and the prince was juſt going to ſalute him, when he ſpurred his horſe up rudely between the two lovers; and, ſeizing

ſeizing by the reins that of the damſel, drew it after him.

It were needleſs to deſcribe the rage of *Gawain*; but with nothing more than a ſhield, a ſword and lance, how could he cope with one whoſe armour rendered him invulnerable? he advanced, however, towards the ſtranger, and with a menacing air, exclaimed: "Vaſſal,* your conduct proclaims you a daſtardly knight. If you will maintain the contrary, quit your armour, and retain ſuch arms only as I have; or elſe give me time to equip myſelf in the ſame manner, and then diſpute my miſtreſs with me, if you dare."

The knight coolly anſwered: "You may without apprehenſion inſult me; I

* This was an expreſſion of contempt, uſed whenever one wanted to inſult a knight; which effect it had, when the knight was not in reality a *vaſſal* of the perſon, who gave him that appellation.

am

am armed; you are not, and I have too great an advantage over you. But, hear me! This woman is your miſtreſs, ſay you? doubtleſs becauſe you make her follow you. Well; I am now going to take her along with me, and then ſhe will be mine. As to the matter of right, what neceſſity is there for us fight about it, when we can ſo eaſily refer to the lady, and abide by the deciſion of her, concerning whom our diſpute is. Let us both ſeparate from her, ſuffer her to make choice, and follow him to whom ſhe thinks herſelf bound to give the preference. If ſhe returns to you, I renounce her and give her up; but if ſhe comes to me" —" Oh! with all my heart," cried *Gauvain*; who, confident in her fidelity, did not imagine that the world could induce her to heſitate for a moment; " let the fair one pronounce judgment between us." At theſe words they each move off to ſome diſtance. She then eyes them both, one after another, examines and compares

pares them; at length, (conceive her choice!) ſhe fixes on the man whom ſhe had never before ſeen. The hero was humbled; yet he had ſo much prudence and moderation, that notwithſtanding his anger, he did not utter a word; but peaceably continued his journey.

The damſel, when ſhe had proceeded a few paces, obſerved that her dogs followed *Gauvain*. She wiſhed to recover them, and required of her new lover, to go and bring them to her. "When our diſpute concerned my miſtreſs," ſaid *Gauvain* to the knight, "you called on me to leave the deciſion to her, and urged her free will in chuſing for herſelf. At preſent it relates to the dogs; ſo let us call them, and let them be the property of him, whom they chuſe to follow."

This propoſition was ſo reaſonable, that it could not be rejected with any

kind of juſtice. They called the dogs; and thoſe faithful animals, deaf to the voice of a ſtranger, obeyed inſtantly that of the man, who had ſeen and taken notice of them at the caſtle. "Friend," ſaid the prince, "I have juſt received a leſſon, which in all probability will be repeated to you ſhortly; but firſt learn from me, that we often meet with ungrateful women, who behave with treachery to thoſe that have done every thing for them, and that we have never yet ſeen a dog forſake the maſter that fed him.*

The knight returned without anſwering. But when the damſel ſaw him

* This ſtory of the dogs, much the ſame to the concluſion, is to be found in the romance of *Lancelot*, in proſe and printed. As it is not in any of the old MS. copies of that romance in verſe, it has probably been taken from this tale, and incorporated with the romance, by ſome more modern compiler.

come

come back unattended, ſhe grew angry, and proteſted that, if he did not bring her the dogs, ſhe would never ſee him more. He then gallopped again after *Gauvain*, with his lance in the reſt. The prince, obliged to ſtand upon his defence, covered himſelf dextrouſly with his ſhield, and at the ſame time made ſo home a tilt at the raviſher, that he unhorſed him and brought him to the ground with a violent ſhock. Encumbered with his arms and ſtunned by the fall, the knight had not the power to recover himſelf before *Gauvain*, diſmounting briſkly, with ſword in hand ſprung upon him, and raiſing up his coat of mail, ſtabbed him in the ſide. He then called the dogs, and quietly remounted his horſe. The lady had approached to ſee the combat. Forlorn by the death of the knight, to whom ſhe had ſurrendered, ſhe threw herſelf in tears at the feet of *Gauvain*, implored his forgiveneſs, and intreated him not to abandon her,

on the approach of night, in the foreſt. "I leave you," ſaid he, "where you left me. With the talents of which I know you to be poſſeſſed, you will eaſily contrive to find a companion: adieu!" He then left her, and arrived the ſame night at Carduel, where he related all the particulars of his adventure.

THE ILL-CUT MANTLE.*

AT Whitſuntide, King *Arthur* held a very brilliant court; for he had ſummoned all the princes, dukes, counts and barons, his vaſſals; and as he intended to have a ſplendid tournament, they were all deſired to bring their wives or miſtreſſes along with them. This was accordingly done; and there was ſo great a concourſe of nobles and knights, with their dames and damſels, that ſo fine an aſſemblage had never before been ſeen in England.

All were diſpoſed, on this feſtive oc-

* This ſtory of the *ill-cut mantle*, or *mantua*, which has ſince been cut out and botched by ſeveral compilers, is given by Mr. *Le Grand* in the French proſe into which it was tranſlated from the original manuſcript, entitled, *Du court mantel.* It was done in the ſixteenth century and printed at Lyons.

caſion, to indulge themſelves in gallantry, mirth and joy; and it, doubtleſs, would have happened ſo, beyond parallel and without alloy, had not the fairy *Morgana*, † through envy of the queen's beauty,

† *Morgana* was the ſiſter of *Arthur* and the diſciple of *Merlin*, who inſtructed her in the magic art. The knight *Guiſmars* was her lover, with whom ſhe was once ſurpriſed in bed by the queen. This laſt made public the tranſaction, though ſhe had herſelf an intrigue with *Lancelot*, in conſequence of which *Morgana*, vowing vengeance, retired from the court. Thence aroſe her enmity and ſubſequent manœuvres to vex the queen.

This *Merlin*, according to the old writers of romance, was a native of England, and long ſerved king *Arthur* by his knowledge of magic. They made him the offspring of a demon and a virgin. Our author apologizes for drawing from the obſcurity in which they might well be ſuffered to remain, theſe wild fables current in the infancy of modern literature; but yet they may be conſidered as memoirs to elucidate the hiſtory of the human mind, and, at any rate, may as well be dipped into, as thoſe large volumes of Greek and Roman mythology

beauty, and jealouſy of the *Sieur Lancelot*, whom ſhe loved, formed a deſign, by her enchantment, to diſturb the peace of this charming aſſembly. Perhaps, if the queen had invited her to the feaſt, the miſchief had not happened.‡

logy; which, with at leaſt equal abſurdity, are leſs curious and intereſting to us.

All our old romances are full of theſe mad tales of fairies, enchanters, and demons good and evil. One is at firſt diſpoſed to conſider this machinery as the clumſy invention of writers without diſcernment, to ſtrike the imagination of their readers; but they relate their fooleries with ſo much ſincerity and faith, that we ſoon find, they are themſelves to be pitied for their credulity: and, perhaps, that is one of the moſt convincing proofs of the infancy of human reaſon in thoſe ages; for the authors of theſe antient romances, and tales, were not only the firſt wits of the time, but the moſt noted for literature and ſcience.

‡ The reader will perceive a reſemblance between the beginning of this tale, and the wedding of *Peleus*, the fairy *Morgana* being the counterpart of *Eris*.

Already

Already were the tables placed, and prepared for dinner, the king engaged in converſation, at a window, with the *Sieur Gauvain*, when they deſcried a young gentleman, coming on horſeback, and bearing a fine valiſe of crimſon velvet, tied up carefully. As ſoon as he had diſmounted, he took his valiſe under his arm, walked up the ſteps of the palace and entered the hall. The company made way for him, and he approaching towards the king, with bended knee addreſſed him thus: "Sire, I am ſent to you from a lady of diſtinction, who loves you; ſhe has a requeſt to make of you, and before I declare what it is, I aſſure you, on her part, that in aſſenting to it, you will not render yourſelf liable either to reproach or miſchief." The king raiſed his head and ſaid: "Friend, I grant your miſtreſs's ſuit:" the gentleman thanked him in his lady's name, and opened the valiſe.

You

You may ſuppoſe that the king and all his company were very deſirous to know what it contained. The meſſenger on opening drew out of it, a mantle, for richneſs and elegance ſuperior to any thing that had yet been diſplayed in that kingdom. Nor are we to wonder at the ſurprizing beauty of the mantle; it was the workmanſhip of a fairy, and had by enchantment the virtue of diſcovering the infidelity of all dames and damſels; for it would fit on none, without being either too long or too ſhort, who had been diſloyal to their lord or lover. It was a contrivance of the miſchievous *Morgana*, that the queen and the ladies might expoſe themſelves by wearing it. But if they had known the quality of the ſilk it was made of, never would they have choſen to appear in the room where it was.

The gentleman, employed by the fairy as her meſſenger, then preſented it

to the king, explaining to him its virtues and adding: "Sire, the favour that my lady ordered me to requeſt of you, and which you have been pleaſed to grant, is, that there be no dame or damſel in your court exempted from putting on the mantle; and to her, on whom it ſhall appear neither too long, nor too ſhort, my lady makes it a preſent, that it may be a decoration to her all her life."

When the king perceived that he had made an irrefragable promiſe of ſuch tendency, he was greatly concerned. But it was then too late; and it was neceſſary to comply with it. *Gauvain* then obſerved to him: "Sire, ſince it muſt be ſo, the queen and all the ladies ſhould be ſent for." "Do you then go upon that errand," anſwered the king; "for I am reſolved to keep my promiſe." *Gauvain* accordingly went to find the queen, and told her, that the king deſired ſhe would attend him in the hall, with all her beautiful

beautiful companions, that it might be determined, which was the moſt handſome, to whom his majeſty was to make a preſent. He took care not to divulge the qualities of the mantle; otherwiſe not one would have attended the ſummons.

The queen, then, with her noble company came before the preſence of the king; who, ſpreading out the mantle, ſaid: "Madam, I give this fine robe to the lady whom it will beſt fit in this aſſembly." He ſaid not another word, and wiſhed he had as little to do in the buſineſs. The queen, obſerving the extraordinary beauty of the robe, coveted it moſt heartily, and threw it upon her ſhoulders to try how it would fit; when it was found to be a little too ſhort before, though behind it was quite long enough.

Meſſire

Meſſire *Ivain*, * ſon of prince *Urien*, who perceived the queen change colour, (for from the laughter of the bye-ſtanders, ſhe ſurmiſed ſome hidden pleaſantry) addreſſed her thus: "Madam, I think this mantle is not long enough for you; let that young lady near you try it." The damſel took it and put it on with alacrity; but it was too ſhort by more than half a foot. Meſſire *Queux*, who was the moſt vain-glorious buffoon in the king's houſhold, ſaid to the queen "Madam, you are more loyal than ſhe." "Meſſire *Queux*," ſaid the queen, "what do you mean by that expreſſion? I beg you will explain it to me."

* Knights, when mentioned, or ſpoken to, were called, *Sire*, *Meſſire* or *Monſigneur*. Even kings and queens gave them that title. The poet here obſerves exactly this *etiquette*. It is ſaid to be from this antient cuſtom, that the members of the parliament of Paris are called, *Noſſeigneurs*, eſtabliſhed when that parliament was compoſed of knights.

He

He then related to her every particular of the affair. She was poſſeſſed of prudence; and ſaw at once, that if ſhe betrayed anger, her ſhame would only be the more flagrant. She therefore pretended to laugh it off, as one of *Morgana's* curious tricks; and though ſhe would much rather not have been preſent at this ceremony, yet ſhe called out with a good-humoured countenance, "Come, ladies, what do you wait for? why heſitate, ſince I firſt ſhewed the example?"

Meſſire *Queux*, who was quite delighted to ſee the poor ladies entangled in this manner, cried, "ladies, come forward; and prove this day your fidelity to all thoſe ill-fated knights, who, for your ſakes, undergo ſo many hardſhips."—When they heard theſe words, not one but heartily wiſhed herſelf at home. They all refuſed to try on the robe; when the king, taking pity on them, ſaid to the meſſenger: "Friend, I ima-

gine you may take back your mantle; for it ſeems to be ſo *ill-made*, that, ſo far as I can ſee, it will not fit any one of theſe ladies. "Ah, Sire," anſwered the knight, "I claim the performance of your promiſe: a king's word is always held ſacred."

At that moment there was not in the whole court a wife or miſtreſs whoſe countenance was ſteady and ſpirits unmoved. All were ſo polite as to decline the priority of trial, in favour of each other. The queen obſerved Meſſire *Queux* very buſy with his raillery. She called to him, and ſaid: Meſſire *Queux*, try it on your own wife, without ſo much noiſe and buſtle; we ſhall ſee how it becomes her." Now he was married to a very fine woman inveſted with a high poſt in the queen's houſhold; in whom he had ſuch confidence, that he thought if ſhe was unfaithful, there could be no ſuch thing as fidelity in the world. He called

led her inſtantly: "Come, my love, to-day ſhall you make known your worth, and be proclaimed the mirror of wives: take that mantle boldly, and put it on: for I believe it was made for you alone." His wife anſwered: "I think it more adviſeable to leave it to thoſe ladies near me; they will imagine that I claim it through pride or arrogance, and will owe me no good will on that account." Never mind that, my dear," replied the huſband; "for I vow, however they may be offended, you ſhall be the firſt to try it;" he then without more ado himſelf threw it upon her back. But this vile mantle was ſo extremely ſhort behind, that it barely covered the indecent parts, and before it did not reach the knee. Meſſire *Queux* was ſo confounded, that he knew not what face to put upon it; he ſaw it was impoſſible to cover his diſgrace. All were delighted at the circumſtance, on account of his malignant ſatisfaction at the embarraſſment of the

ladies. Meſſire *Idier* aſked him: "what do you mean to do with this mantle? ſince it fits your wife ſo well, do you intend that ſhe ſhould keep it, or will you let the others have a trial?" *Queux* hung down his head in confuſion, and made no anſwer; but the wife, full of ſhame and vexation threw it down and ran away.

"The ladies were wonderfully troubled, to find that they muſt all try their fortune. Meſſire *Lucan*, a great favourite of the king, ſaid to him: "Sire, you ſhould have the robe tried on the miſtreſs of Meſſire *Gauvain*. The latter had always had ſome ſuſpicion of her connection with another knight, and would have been heartily glad, if ſhe could be excuſed taking a part in the game. Nevertheleſs the king ordered the lady to be called; and ſhe could not but obey the mandate. The mantle was put on her, and extended ſo far behind, that it made a train of near a foot and a half, while the right lappet did not fall below the garter. You

You may be assured that, then, Messire *Queux*, who had for some time lost the faculty of speech, recovered it, and expressed his joy and thanksgiving, that there would be others to laugh at as well as him. Messire *Gauvain* eyed his mistress askant, with an air that by no means boded satisfaction. Messire *Queux* took and seated her next his wife, saying "Miss, keep close to my dame, for you are as *good a woman* as she." The king finding the whole court convulsed with laughter, could not prevent himself from giving way to it likewise; and since it had proceeded so far, he was resolved to see the end of the farce. He took by the hand the mistress of Messire *Ivain* and observed to her: "This mantle, Miss, should of right be your property; for I never heard any thing of you, that could destroy your claim to it."

The mantle was accordingly wrapped about her, but it made a piteous sight:

while it lay upon the ground and incumbered her feet before, it juſt came down to the rump behind. "Good heavens!" cried *Girflet*, "here is a terrible impoſture! He muſt be mad that puts confidence in woman!" The poor lady was ſo aſhamed, that ſhe was at a loſs what to do or ſay. She took the robe and threw it ſpitefully upon a knight. The ſeneſchal, on this, remarked to her: "There is no occaſion, Miſs, to work yourſelf into anger; theſe miſhaps are common in the world; go and place yourſelf by *Genelas* and my wife:" and thither ſhe went with a heavy heart.

The king next called *Percival's* miſtreſs. The poor young lady ſubmitted to have the mantle put upon her back, ſince there was no help for it. In fact, it fitted ſo indifferently, that the ſtrings broke off, and the robe ſlipped upon the ground. The damſel, in great dudgeon left it lying there, and with down-

caſt

caſt looks went to take her ſeat by the other, curſing the invention in her heart. The king became a little chagrined at the diſtreſs of the poor ladies, and wiſhed to drop all further inveſtigation. But the meſſenger refuſed to comply, and called upon him to perform the promiſe that he had ſolemnly made before all his barons.

But why ſhould I prolong the ſtory? the miſtreſs of Meſſire *Idier* next tried the robe, with the ſame ſucceſs as the others, and was conducted by *Queux* as a proper companion for his wife. Finally, there was not a knight, who did not, to his great ſorrow and mortification, try it on either his wife or miſtreſs; and it was peculiarly unfortunate, that thoſe who had the greateſt confidence were the moſt mortified and diſappointed. The meſſenger perceiving that his mantle would fit none of the ladies, who were there preſent, cried out, "Sire, I intreat

you,

you, in order that I may be enabled fully to diſcharge my duty, that you will cauſe all the apartments to be ſearched, to ſee if there is no lady left, who has not yet put on the mantle.

The king then gave his orders to *Girflet*; who went, and after ſearching all the chambers, found only one young lady ſick in bed. "Riſe, fair lady," ſaid *Girflet*; "the king requires your preſence in the hall." "Meſſire *Girflet*," anſwered the damſel, "I would obey the royal mandate with pleaſure; but you ſee what condition I am in; on which account I think you ought to excuſe me." "Madam," replied *Girflet*, "I ſhall wait till you are dreſſed and ready to come along with me." When ſhe found no excuſe would be taken, ſhe roſe and repaired to the hall.

Her lover was there, whoſe name was *Karados*,

Karados,* a good and a valiant knight. As he ſaw her coming, all his blood was put into a ſudden motion, and it was clearly perceived in his face. He had been happy in the reflection, that ſhe was not in company, on account of the danger he thought ſhe would incur, and the mortifications he had witneſſed in others. But his joy was then converted into chagrin, as he concluded that he would come in for his ſhare in the ſhame and diſgrace; for he loved her ardently, and if he could have prevented it, would never have ſuffered her try the mantle. He therefore, coming up to her ſaid:

* Our author, obſerving that all the names in the old romances are not fictitious, and that this in particular, was that of a diſtinguiſhed family in the fourteenth century, is induced to conclude, that the authors took occaſion to compliment their reſpective patrons, by introducing them with *eclat* into their ſtories; as the Greek epic poet did with reſpect to *Tychius*, and other of his friends and benefactors.

" My love, I entreat you, if you have any doubts, do not put on the robe; for I would not, on any conſideration, be a witneſs of your ſhame, and have my eſteem and regard leſſened. I would rather remain in ignorance, than know a diſagreeable truth, and have the mortification to behold you ſeated by Miſs *Genelas* and the wife of *Queux*." *Girflet* then took up the diſcourſe, and ſaid to *Karados*. " About what do you make yourſelf uneaſy? don't you ſee more than two hundred ladies ſitting there, whoſe loyalty was this morning thought as unimpeachable as any in the country?"

The damſel, whom nothing alarmed or diſconcerted, took the mantle and boldly wrapped it round her. And, indeed, her confidence was well founded; for it ſat ſo well both before and behind, that no mantua-maker on earth could have fitted her better. The meſſenger, who now ſaw the adventure accompliſhed, ſaid

ſaid aloud: "lady, you have given your lover cauſe indeed for exultation; I leave you the mantle; for it is your right." The king confirmed the award. There was neither lady nor knight, who did not envy the lot of theſe two lovers; but they thought it beſt to keep their ſentiments to themſelves. So they returned home in ſorrow and mortification; nor could they be induced again to laugh at what had paſſed. Meſſire *Karados* went off in raptures with his miſtreſs; they carried the robe along with them, and took care to cheriſh and preſerve it.

Now, I have finiſhed my ſtory,* all but acquainting you with the name of the

* This entertaining ſtory, the moral of which ſhould be excuſed, as it is evidently meant merely as a piece of humour, is alſo to be found in the firſt part of the romance of *Triſtan*, and in the romance of *Percival*; but in *Triſtan*, inſtead of a mantle,

the lady, who by her virtue obtained the ſlippery mantle. Know then, that her name was * * * * * * *

Such is the concluſion of the tale, in which the abrupt reticence has an humourous effect.

mantle, the fairy's preſent is a goblet. This is filled with wine, and given to the ladies to drink out of. She who has been faithleſs to her lord cannot drink without ſpilling the wine.—In *Percival*, the men, as it is but fair, firſt taſte of the wine, that their errors might alſo be diſcovered; and they are all ſo aukward as to ſpill a part of it. Among the ladies, ſhe who is found ſpotleſs, is the wife, and not the miſtreſs of *Karados*; which is more moral, and conſolatory to huſbands.

La *Fontaine* has likewiſe imitated this ſtory from the *enchanted cup* of *Arioſto*; and in tranſlating from the Italian into the French, he has only reſtored, without knowing it, what the former had firſt taken from the latter. He has changed very little of the ſubſtance of the Italian author; but has embelliſhed the particular details; in which kind of embelliſhment he is known to excel. He has alſo compoſed a comedy on the ſame ſubject.

THE

THE MINSTREL WHO WAS TURNED OUT OF HELL. A MONKISH TALE.

THERE lived formerly at Sens a minſtrel, the beſt natured fellow on earth, who for a treaſure, would not have had a diſpute with a child, but a man without conduct, and the moſt irregular that ever lived. He paſſed his life in gaming, or at the tavern, unleſs he was at ſtill worſe places: if he earned a little money, directly he carried it thither; was he without, he left his fiddle in pawn. Thus always tattered, pennyleſs and often barefoot, or in his ſhirt expoſed to the north wind and rain, he would have forced your pity. Notwithſtanding this, gay, content, and his head at all times covered with a chaplet of green leaves, he ſung without ceaſing, and would have aſked but one thing of God,

which was, to have made the week all Sundays.

At laſt he died. A young devil, ſtill a novice, who for a month paſt had been running up and down to ſnap up ſome ſoul, without having been able, notwithſtanding all his trouble, to ſucceed, being by accident near the ſpot when our fidler ſlipt his wind, took him upon his back, and quite joyous at his ſucceſs carried him to hell.

It was exactly the hour when the devils returned from their hunting. *Lucifer* was ſeated on his throne to ſee them arrive, and as they came in, every one of them threw at his feet, what he had been able to take that day.

This brought a prieſt, that a robber, the one champions killed in ſingle combat, others biſhops, abbots and monks, all caught knapping when they leaſt expected

pected it. The ſable monarch ſtopt his captives awhile to examine them, and on a ſignal immediately cauſed them to be thrown into his cauldron. The time being over, he ordered the gates to be ſhut and aſked if all the devils were returned: "yes," anſwered ſome one, "except a poor ideot, very ſimple and unexperienced, who went out above a month ago, and whom we muſt not probably expect this day, becauſe he will be aſhamed of returning empty handed.

This joker had ſcarcely finiſhed ſpeaking, when in came the young devil loaded with his tattered minſtrel whom he humbly preſented to his ſovereign. "Come hither," ſaid *Lucifer* to the ſinger, "what are you, robber, ſpy, or ribbald?" "No, Sire, I was a minſtrel, and you ſee in me one who poſſeſſed all the ſcience that any man on earth could have, notwithſtanding which I experienced above a great many difficulties and much mi-

fery, but ſince you have taken upon yourſelf the trouble of lodging me, I will ſing, if that will amuſe you." "Yes, by the Pope's toe, ſongs, that to be ſure is the kind of muſick I want; here, hark'ye you ſee that cauldron and you are already naked, I employ you to heat it, and above all to take care there is always a good fire." "Moſt willingly, Sire, at leaſt I ſhall be certain for the future not to ſuffer from cold." Our hero immediately took poſſeſſion of his office, and during ſome time, acquitted himſelf of his commiſſion punctually.

But one day *Lucifer* having convoked all his aſſiſtants to go with him on earth on a general ſweep, before he ſat out called for the ſtoker, "I am going abroad," ſays he, "and I leave under your guard all my priſoners, but remember, you ſhall be anſwerable for them with the eyes of your head, and that if at my return, a ſingle one is wanting"——"Sire, go in

in peace, I will be anſwerable for them, you ſhall find things in order at your return, and you ſhall learn to rely on my fidelity"——" Once more take ſpecial care, your every thing depends on it. I will have you eaten up alive." Theſe precautions taken, the infernal army ſet off.

This was the moment Saint *Peter* waited for, he had heard this diſcourſe above in heaven, and kept himſelf on the watch to profit by it; as ſoon as the demons were out, he diſguiſed himſelf, took a long black beard, with well twiſted muſtachoes, deſcended into hell, and accoſting the minſtrel, "friend, ſhall we two make a party, here is a box and dice and ſome good money to be won," at the ſame time he ſhewed a long and large purſe full of eſterlings. "Sire," replied the other, "It is in vain that you come here to tempt me, for I ſwear to you by God I poſſeſs nothing in the world, but this

torn shirt that you see." "Well, if you have no money, stake in its room a few souls, I will be contented with that money, and you need not fear wanting them in a hurry." "No faith I'll not do that, I too well remember what my master told me at parting, find me some other expedient, for as to that I am your humble servant." "Blockhead, how do you suppose he is to know it, and in such a multitude; tell me, what will be five or six souls more or less." "Take hold, look, see those pretty pieces quite new, it only depends on you to make some of them pass into your pocket, make use of the opportunity whilst I am here, for if I once go out I shall not return.—Come I'll stake twenty pence, bring hither some soul! the unhappy fidler devoured the dice with his eyes, he took them up, put them down, and then took them up again. At length he could hold out no longer, and consented to take a few throws,

through

though but for one ſoul at a time, for fear of expoſing himſelf to too great a loſs, "Done, for one," replies the apoſtle, "fair or brown, male or female, I care little which, I leave the choice to you, play away," one went then to fetch ſome of the damned, t'other ſpreads abroad his eſterlins, they ſat down by the ſide of the furnace and began their party. But the Saint played a ſure game and therefore conſtantly won, it was to no purpoſe that the ſinger to recover his loſings, doubled and trippled his ſtakes, he always loſt.

Not being able to account for this continual run of ill luck, he ſuſpected treachery in his adverſary, grew angry and ſwore he would not pay, and called the apoſtle a ſharper and knave, the apoſtle gave him the lye, they took each other by the hair and boxed, luckily the ſaint proved the ſtrongeſt, and the other after having

having been well drubbed, found himſelf obliged to beg pardon. He propoſed then to begin the game anew, if the former loſſes might go for nothing, promiſing beſides to pay very faithfully and even to let him chooſe where he would out of the cauldron. Thieves, monks, wenches, knights, prieſts, or countrymen, canons, or canoneſſes. *Peter* had at his tongue's end the word knave, and reproached him more than once, but he aſked ſo many pardons, that the ſaint ſuffered himſelf to be prevailed on, and returned to play.

The minſtrel in this party was no more ſucceſsful than in the former, and I have told you the reaſon, he grew warm, ſtaked a hundred ſouls, a thouſand ſouls at a time, changed the dice, changed his place, and nevertheleſs loſt every throw. At length in deſpair he aroſe and quitted the game; curſed the ſaint, the dice-

box,

box, and his bad luck, which followed him even to hell. *Peter* then approached the cauldron to chooſe and draw forth the ſouls he had won; each of them implored his pity to be one of the happy, there were ſuch cries that no one could be heard; the minſtrel in fury ran up, and like a man that would riſque every thing, he propoſed to play for all the ſouls that remained. The apoſtle deſired nothing better, this important laſt ſtake was decided on the ſpot, and I have no need to tell you what were the pangs and feelings of the patients who were witneſſes. Their lot happily fell into the hands of the man of miracles, he won once more, and ſet off in a hurry with them for Paradiſe.

A few hours after entered *Lucifer* with his company, but what was his pain when he ſaw his fires out, his cauldron empty, and not a ſingle ſoul of the thouſands

ſands he had left, he called the ſtoker, "raſcal, what you done with my priſoners?"—"Ah! Sire, I throw myſelf at your feet, have pity on me, I will tell you all." He then recounted his adventure, owning that he was not more fortunate in hell than he had been on earth. "Who is the blockhead that brought us this gambler," ſaid the irritated prince, "let them give him a good baſting with the ſtirrup leathers." Immediately they ſeized the little devilling who had made ſo bad a preſent, and trimmed him ſo heartily, that he promiſed faithfully never to take charge of or meddle with a minſtrel. "Drive hence this dealer in crotchets," added the monarch, "God may receive him in his Paradiſe, he who loves joy, for my part I will never more hear minſtrels mentioned."

The ſinger aſked nothing more, puſhed off nimbly, and came running to Paradiſe,

radiſe, where Saint *Peter* received him with open arms, and took him in with the others.

Minſtrels and jugglers, you may from henceforward rejoice, there is no hell for you, he who played againſt St. *Peter* has ſhut the gates!

END OF VOL. I.

BRITISH
11 JU74
MUSEUM

Lanval

[illegible] The Pedlar

Norman Bachelor

The two Tradesmen & Clown

Child melted in the Sun

[illegible] House breaker see

[illegible] The Minstrels

The B. of Vergy

The three Thieves

The Wife of Tried her husband

The Sexton of [illegible]

The Hermit

The Hermit

The Knight [illegible]

The [illegible]

The Minstrel